

## Index Page

### Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-25

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs**

**Session No. : 15**

**Consolidated e-file name: CMAB-1-e1.docx**

<b>Reply Serial No.</b>	<b>Question Serial No.</b>	<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Head</b>	<b>Programme</b>
<a href="#">CMAB001</a>	2777	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB002</a>	2778	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB003</a>	2780	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB004</a>	2781	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB005</a>	2782	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB006</a>	2783	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB007</a>	2784	CHAN Wing-kwong	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB008</a>	1034	CHAN Yung	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB009</a>	1035	CHAN Yung	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB010</a>	1036	CHAN Yung	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB011</a>	1037	CHAN Yung	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB012</a>	1038	CHAN Yung	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB013</a>	1039	CHAN Yung	144	(4) Rights of the Individual
<a href="#">CMAB014</a>	1040	CHAN Yung	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB015</a>	1041	CHAN Yung	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB016</a>	1042	CHAN Yung	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB017</a>	1043	CHAN Yung	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
				Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB018</a>	1044	CHAN Yung	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB019</a>	1045	CHAN Yung	144	-
<a href="#">CMAB020</a>	3236	CHOW Ho-ding, Holden	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB021</a>	3237	CHOW Ho-ding, Holden	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB022</a>	3238	CHOW Ho-ding, Holden	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB023</a>	3241	CHOW Ho-ding, Holden	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB024</a>	3261	CHOW Ho-ding, Holden	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB025</a>	0391	CHOW Man-kong	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB026</a>	0392	CHOW Man-kong	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB027</a>	3071	CHOW Man-kong	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB028</a>	1376	HO Kwan-yiu, Junius	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB029</a>	1377	HO Kwan-yiu, Junius	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB030</a>	1390	HO Kwan-yiu, Junius	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB031</a>	2084	KAN Wai-mun, Carmen	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB032</a>	3117	KAN Wai-mun, Carmen	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB033</a>	3293	LAM Lam, Nixie	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB034</a>	2696	LAM San-keung	144	-
<a href="#">CMAB035</a>	1928	LEE Chun-keung	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB036</a>	1929	LEE Chun-keung	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB037</a>	1930	LEE Chun-keung	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB038</a>	2557	LEE Tsz-king, Dominic	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
				Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB039</a>	1150	LEE Wai-king, Starry	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB040</a>	0243	LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB041</a>	0244	LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB042</a>	0245	LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB043</a>	0813	LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin	144	(5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data
<a href="#">CMAB044</a>	0814	LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB045</a>	0793	MA Fung-kwok	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB046</a>	0295	NG Kit-chong, Johnny	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB047</a>	2362	SHANG Hailong	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB048</a>	2024	TAN Yueheng	144	(3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices
<a href="#">CMAB049</a>	1228	TSE Wai-chun, Paul	144	-
<a href="#">CMAB050</a>	1419	YUNG Hoi-yan	144	(2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
<a href="#">CMAB051</a>	1049	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB052</a>	1050	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB053</a>	1051	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB054</a>	1052	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB055</a>	1053	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB056</a>	1054	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB057</a>	1055	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB058</a>	1059	CHAN Yung	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB059</a>	1158	IP LAU Suk-yee, Regina	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB060</a>	0118	LAI Tung-kwok	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB061</a>	2443	LEUNG Hei, Edward	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB062</a>	1370	LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB063</a>	1701	LUK Hon-man, Benson	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB064</a>	1293	MA Fung-kwok	163	Electoral Services
<a href="#">CMAB065</a>	2383	SHANG Hailong	163	Electoral Services

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB001**

**(Question Serial No. 2777)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

As stated in the Budget, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will continue to enhance and further apply information technology in electoral arrangements during 2024-25. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) The details and estimated expenditure on further applying information technology.
- (2) What measures are in place to ensure the safe application of information technology during the elections to prevent failure?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 53)

Reply:

Regarding electoral arrangements, the Government has strived to introduce various information technology under the improved electoral system in recent years with a view to continuously making public elections more efficient and user-friendly. Examples include the extensive application of the Electronic Poll Register system for issuing ballot papers, and the use of an optical mark recognition system to facilitate vote counting etc. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) will continue collaborating with the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) and the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) to proactively study the wider application of information technology at various stages of the election workflow, including voter registration as well as casting and counting of votes etc., with a view to improving work efficiency of elections and further facilitating various stakeholders. Nevertheless, before introducing any specific facilitation to electoral arrangements, we must ensure that elections are fair, just and honest, and further strike a proper balance among the application of information technology, efficiency enhancement, security risks, privacy protection and public confidence etc. The expenditure required for the relevant work is absorbed in the recurrent expenditure of the CMAB and the REO and cannot be itemised separately.

2. The Government and the EAC have all along attached great importance to ensuring the safe and efficient conduct of public elections. As such, stringent processes will be put in place before implementation of any new technologies to ensure the safe and orderly conduct of elections. These arrangements include conducting security risk and feasibility assessments before implementation, engaging qualified and reliable contractors for procurement, carrying out various load tests repeatedly, commissioning third party contractors for security assessment, adopting a multi-tier security confirmation mechanism, and conducting reviews on various elections to draw on the experience for continuous system improvement and enhancement etc. In future, the Government and the EAC will continue to proactively study the application of information technology to enhance efficiency of public elections, while endeavouring to ensure elections are smoothly held in a fair, just, honest, safe and orderly manner.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB002**

**(Question Serial No. 2778)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau's main responsibilities include promoting public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following?

1. The actual expenditure on promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law in the past 3 years, and the estimated expenditure on such work for 2024-25.
2. What concrete measures will be put in place to promote public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law in 2024-25?
3. Has the Government regularly evaluated the effectiveness of promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 52)

Reply:

The Constitution and the Basic Law together form the constitutional basis of the HKSAR, providing the strongest safeguard for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government has all along attached great importance to the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law, with a view to enabling the public to have a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

2. In the past 3 financial years (i.e. 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24), the actual annual expenditure of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law is about \$17 million, \$32 million and \$34 million (estimated actual expenditure) respectively. The expenditure of the past 2 financial years has substantially increased mainly because the CMAB has, in line with the enhanced promotion strategy formulated by the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC), augmented relevant promotion and publicity work through internal

deployment of resources. As for the 2024-25 financial year, the estimated expenditure on relevant work is about \$26 million. The CMAB will, having regard to the actual circumstances, consider devoting additional resources through internal deployment to conduct the promotion work.

3. In the coming year, the CMAB will continue adopting a diversified approach in publicity and public education, including making extensive use of online platforms and social media to disseminate publicity information, rolling out large-scale publicity and promotional events at the community level, producing television and radio programmes that are comprehensive and easy-to-understand, and enhancing publicity work targeting specific groups such as students, teachers, youths and civil servants, thereby striving to enhance public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law.

4. The CBLPSC provides advice and steer on the overall strategy and key work plans for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law, and monitors, evaluates and reviews promotional programmes undertaken by government departments and non-governmental organisations. The CBLPSC and its working groups will review the format, content and effectiveness of promotional activities from time to time through evaluating their popularity and efficacy based on the number and feedback of participants, and advise how to optimise the promotion strategy in light of the development and trend of promotional media and information technology. We will continue to closely keep in view the effectiveness of the promotional activities, and adjust the promotion strategy as appropriate having regard to the actual circumstances in order to achieve the best results.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB003**

**(Question Serial No. 2780)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

As stated in the Budget, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will continue to strengthen the promotion and co-ordination work in taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area through the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office during 2024-25. In this regard, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the staff establishment, expenditure on emoluments and operating expenses of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office in the past 3 years, and what are the estimated staff establishment, expenditure on emoluments and operating expenses for 2024-25?
2. In taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area, what essential functions have been carried out by the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office since its establishment?
3. On strengthening the promotion and co-ordination work in taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area, what are the work priorities of the Guangdong- Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office for 2024-25?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 51)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has all along attached great importance to the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area). Shortly upon the establishment of the current-term Government, the Chief Executive promptly set up the Steering Group on Integration into National Development (Steering Group). The Steering Group chaired by the Chief Executive co-ordinates the implementation of and provides steer on all work relating to Hong Kong's integration into the national development, including actively dovetailing with national strategies such as the development of the Greater Bay Area. The Guangdong-Hong



Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) has been rendering full support to the work of the Steering Group in taking forward Greater Bay Area development as well as in monitoring the implementation of various policy measures introduced to foster the higher-level connectivity in the Greater Bay Area.

2. Also, the Office is the focal point of liaison between the HKSAR Government and the Mainland authorities and the Macao Special Administrative Region Government on matters pertaining to Greater Bay Area development. It maintains close communication with relevant Central Ministries and Commissions, the Guangdong Provincial Government, the Macao Special Administrative Region Government and the nine municipalities of the Greater Bay Area, including arranging high-level visits and meetings, and conducting regular exchanges on different issues. For example, in April 2023, the Office was responsible for organising and co-ordinating a visit to four Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (namely Shenzhen, Dongguan, Foshan and Guangzhou) by a delegation of the HKSAR Government and Legislative Council led by the Chief Executive. The delegation has gained a deeper understanding of the latest developments and opportunities in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area. The delegation also had meetings and exchanges with leaders of the Guangdong Province and of the relevant cities, and reached a strong consensus to join hands in promoting the integrated and high-quality development of the Greater Bay Area. In addition, the visit has successfully conveyed a positive message of the enormous development opportunities of the Greater Bay Area to different sectors of the community.

3. The Office also co-ordinates with all bureaux to make full use of the respective co-operation mechanisms set up with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government to deepen interface, including the Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference and the task forces on various policy areas. For example, in end-2023, the Central Government promulgated a number of important planning documents regarding the development of the Greater Bay Area, including the Overall Development Plan for the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Co-operation Zone and the Three-Year Action Plan for the Development of International Business Environment in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The Office promptly communicated and liaised with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government to jointly step up efforts in taking forward the development of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Co-operation Zone.

4. At the same time, the Office has also strived to make use of diversified and multi-media means and channels, including traditional media, the Internet and social media platforms, as well as physical activities and exhibitions etc., to promote the significant opportunities of the development of the Greater Bay Area to local, Mainland and overseas stakeholders. The Office also maintains close liaison with consulates in Hong Kong, chambers of commerce of various sectors, professional bodies, youth associations, think-tanks etc. Through organising and participating in online and offline seminars etc., the Office elucidates to these organisations and stakeholders the significance and unlimited opportunities of Greater Bay Area development to Hong Kong.

5. In the coming year, the HKSAR Government will continue to proactively take forward Greater Bay Area development and to enhance Hong Kong's high-level collaborations with Guangdong, Shenzhen, Macao along with other cities of the Greater Bay Area, so as to strive for more policy innovations and breakthroughs, as well as the compatibility and alignment of rules and mechanisms, thereby creating greater opportunities for Hong Kong residents and

enterprises and making contributions to the high-quality development of the Greater Bay Area. The Office will continue to render full support to take forward the work in this regard.

6. The staff establishment and expenditure of the Office for taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area in the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	Staff establishment	Revised estimate		Sub-total (\$ million)
		Staff cost on civil service posts (\$ million)	Other expenses (\$ million)	
2021-22	33	32	27.50	59.50
2022-23	33	32	41.25	73.25
2023-24	33	33	29.70	62.70

For 2024-25, the number of staff in the establishment of the Office is 31, and the estimated expenditure is about \$64.4 million (including staff cost of about \$33 million on civil service posts and other expenses of about \$31.4 million).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****CMAB004****(Question Serial No. 2781)**

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

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

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the Mainland Offices established by the Government, please provide the following information for the past 3 years:

1. The staff establishment of each Mainland Office.
2. The expenditure of each Mainland Office.
3. The number and type of requests for assistance received by each Mainland Office.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The staff establishment and expenditure of the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government in the past 3 years are set out in the table below:

Office	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Staff establishment	Actual expenditure (\$ million)	Staff establishment	Actual expenditure (\$ million)	Staff establishment	Revised estimated expenditure (\$ million)
Beijing Office	23	83.65	22	98.69	22	88.69
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong	18	64.15	18	75.82	18	82.22
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Shanghai	15	62.86	15	70.96	15	70.10

Office	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Staff establishment	Actual expenditure (\$ million)	Staff establishment	Actual expenditure (\$ million)	Staff establishment	Revised estimated expenditure (\$ million)
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Chengdu	13	45.49	13	58.14	13	51.99
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan	13	47.05	13	53.42	13	48.49

Note: The actual expenditure of respective Mainland Offices increased in 2022-23 as more celebratory events were organised to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR. With the successful conclusion of the events, the revised estimated expenditure for 2023-24 decreased correspondingly, except for the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong with an increase in expenditure arising from the setting up of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre.

2. In the past 3 years, the numbers of requests for assistance received by the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government are set out in the table below:

Office	Year	Assistance cases which were related to immigration and personal safety matters	Other assistance cases	Total
Beijing Office	2021	32	22	54
	2022	32	21	53
	2023	84	15	99
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong	2021	468	87	555
	2022	595	134	729
	2023	225	60	285
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Shanghai	2021	34	5	39
	2022	268	3	271
	2023	75	21	96
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Chengdu	2021	24	6	30
	2022	185	2	187
	2023	27	4	31

Office	Year	Assistance cases which were related to immigration and personal safety matters	Other assistance cases	Total
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan	2021	23	13	36
	2022	20	17	37
	2023	17	18	35

3. “Assistance cases which were related to immigration and personal safety matters” refer to emergency assistance in relation to accidents (e.g. traffic accidents or fire) or other emergencies (e.g. robbery, assault, etc.), while “Other assistance cases” in general include commercial and trade disputes, complaints relating to real estate, and complaints against authorities in the Mainland, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB005**

**(Question Serial No. 2782)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Providing information and other appropriate support to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland is one of the major responsibilities of Hong Kong's Mainland Offices. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The expenditure and staff establishment of the Mainland Offices on supporting Hong Kong students studying in the Mainland in the past 3 years and the current year?
2. The expenditure on supporting and sponsoring activities organised by student or youth groups of Hong Kong people in the Mainland in the past 3 years and the current year, and the numbers of activities.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government have been striving to maintain close communication and liaison with Hong Kong people and associations in the Mainland, including students, youth groups, etc., so as to understand the situations of Hong Kong people studying, working and living in the Mainland, and provide appropriate assistance to them as required. Apart from providing information on further studies, employment and daily life matters, the Mainland Offices also from time to time visit Hong Kong students in tertiary institutions, and organise career talks, visits to enterprises, and student gatherings etc. On employment support, the Mainland Offices not only offer internship places, but also co-ordinate with Hong Kong enterprises and Mainland institutions and enterprises to provide internship positions to Hong Kong students and young people, enabling them to accumulate work experience and plan for career development.

2. In addition, the Mainland Offices also offer support and sponsorship to the activities organised by Hong Kong student and youth groups, such as annual dinners and orientation activities at tertiary institutions, as appropriate. Besides, the Mainland Offices arrange different activities for Hong Kong students and young people to enhance their understanding

of the country and foster among them a greater affection for the country, so that they could better grasp the opportunities brought about by the country's development.

3. As supporting Hong Kong students and young people in the Mainland is an integral part of the duties and functions of the Mainland Offices, the expenditure and staff establishment involved as well as the number of activities have not been singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB006**

**(Question Serial No. 2783)**

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

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

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Equal Opportunities Commission is committed to providing equal opportunities in education and employment for ethnic minorities. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The actual expenditure and estimated expenditure on promoting equal opportunities in education for ethnic minorities in 2023-24 and 2024-25.
2. The projects and programmes on promoting equal opportunities in education for ethnic minorities in 2023-24 and 2024-25, including nature, objectives, publicity platforms of the projects, as well as manpower, resources and expenditure involved.
3. The actual expenditure and estimated expenditure on promoting equal opportunities in employment for ethnic minorities in 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

In 2023-24, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) promoted equal opportunities in education for ethnic minorities mainly through the following projects:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Publicity Platforms</b>
Racially Friendly Campus Recognition Scheme	Recognition scheme	To encourage schools to promote racial inclusion among students and accord recognition and organise training activity on racial inclusion for teaching staff	Participation of a total of 179 kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, and training for over 400 teachers



School Policy Framework for the “Prevention of Racial Discrimination & Harassment”	Policy guidelines	To facilitate schools in formulating policies on prevention of racial discrimination and harassment	All schools in Hong Kong and EOC’s online platforms
“All Races As One” Learning Kit on Eliminating Racial Discrimination	Learning kit	To support teachers in imparting the concepts of racial inclusion and prevention of racial discrimination	All schools in Hong Kong, and online platforms of EOC and Education Bureau
“Racial Equality in Education” Op-ed Series	Op-ed articles in newspapers	To explain to the general public the difficulties encountered by ethnic minority students in education, and EOC’s related recommendations	Mainstream Chinese and English newspapers

2. EOC will continue to implement the above projects in 2024-25, and consider launching other promotional activities as needed.

3. EOC also promotes equal opportunities in education and employment for ethnic minorities through other public education and publicity work, including the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Charter for Employers, the Equal Opportunity Youth Ambassador Scheme, EOC’s online social media platforms (such as the dedicated page “EO Matters” on Instagram and Facebook, EOC’s LinkedIn account and YouTube channel), training and consultancy services, etc. The promotion of equal opportunities in education and employment for ethnic minorities is an integral part of EOC’s regular duties. The manpower and expenditure involved cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB007**

**(Question Serial No. 2784)**

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

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

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

On the work to “implement public education and publicity activities”, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. How will the Government promote anti-“intra-racial discrimination” in 2024-25? What are the manpower and expenditure involved?
2. How did the Government promote anti-“intra-racial discrimination” in the past 3 years? What were the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) has been striving to foster mutual respect and inclusion between Mainland and Hong Kong residents through varied means of promotion and public education. For individual unpleasant incidents occurred, EOC had issued press releases and penned articles in the media, etc. to condemn the misconduct while promoting the messages of equal opportunities, inclusion and anti-discrimination. Also, EOC had approached the persons concerned in certain cases, requesting them to cease their discriminatory acts.

2. The Government considers that the most appropriate approach is to foster closer bonds and mutual respect between residents of the two places through publicity and education. In this regard, the Government will continue to support EOC in fostering its publicity, promotional and public educational efforts and proactively conveying the positive messages of mutual respect, diversity and inclusion, with a view to safeguarding harmony and stability together.

3. As EOC’s work in public education and publicity is an integral part of regular duties, the expenditure incurred (including staff costs) cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB008**

**(Question Serial No. 1034)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election held in a fair, just, safe, clean and orderly manner on 10 December 2023, please provide information on various activities involved, including the expenditure on the “District Council Election Fun Day” etc.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The Government has all along emphasised that improving the district governance system and reforming the District Councils last year are the final piece of the puzzle of HKSAR's full implementation of the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”, which ensure the steadfast and successful implementation of “One Country, Two Systems” as well as the good governance of the HKSAR. The relevant improvement arrangements and the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election held subsequently even have a direct bearing on the well-being of citizens and their stable and fulfilling lives in districts. To raise public awareness about the election, the Government and various sectors of the community rolled out different publicity initiatives, and the Government even fully mobilised resources and adopted a number of creative publicity means, such as “Night Vibes District Council Election”, “District Council Election into the Community” and “District Council Election Fun Day”, to capture public attention and appeal to electors to actively cast their votes. Such publicity work achieved a positive impact and received wide public recognition. The Government will continue to closely collaborate with the Electoral Affairs Commission, and step up publicity efforts in public elections, so as to enable the public to thoroughly appreciate the importance of the new electoral system and various elections to themselves and thus actively participate in the elections.

2. In 2023-24, the revised estimate for the preparation and implementation of relevant publicity activities for the election is about \$122 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB009**

**(Question Serial No. 1035)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Under Programme (2), the provision for 2024-25 is \$33.6 million (15.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24, and this is mainly due to the increased provision for operating expenses. In this connection, please set out the new expenditure items and the respective amounts under the revised estimate.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

Under Programme (2) "Constitutional and Mainland Affairs", the provision for 2024-25 is \$33.6 million (15.5%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24, of which about \$15 million is mainly for activities to further promote co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong, thereby facilitating Hong Kong's active integration into overall national development and continuing to create strong impetus for growth. The rest of the increased provision is mainly for different types of publicity and promotion initiatives, including enabling various sectors of the community to better grasp and understand the importance of the improved electoral system and the full implementation of the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong" to Hong Kong, and developing among the public a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the relationship between "One Country" and "Two Systems" as well as the constitutional order of the HKSAR etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB010**

**(Question Serial No. 1036)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

At present, there are over 500 000 Hong Kong people living in Guangdong. Does the Government have plans to establish the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong in all the 9 Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to better serve Hong Kong people there? If not, what are the criteria for setting up new offices?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

The service areas of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong of the HKSAR Government and its Shenzhen Liaison Unit cover the nine Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area). The HKSAR Government has established the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre) in April 2023. Through further strengthening strategic co-operation with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, InvestHK and relevant Mainland organisations and institutions, the Promotion Centre organises different types of activities including seminars and study missions, etc. for Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, so as to promote the opportunities brought about by the Greater Bay Area development and to better understand their needs for providing them with practical assistance. At the same time, the Promotion Centre, through different forms of exchanges and promotional activities, encourages Mainland talents and enterprises to leverage Hong Kong's unique advantages under "One Country, Two Systems" and pursue development in Hong Kong. The Promotion Centre also liaises with youth innovation and entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to provide appropriate support to young entrepreneurs from Hong Kong.

2. As it is convenient to travel around the nine Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, we consider that, at the moment, the more desirable arrangement is to integrate and focus the manpower of the Promotion Centre, so that it could make flexible deployment of the manpower to meet the service needs of each Mainland city of the Greater Bay Area. We

will continue to evaluate the work effectiveness of the Promotion Centre from time to time, and to make appropriate arrangements and adjustment depending on the actual circumstances to achieve the best results.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB011**

**(Question Serial No. 1037)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

On promoting the strengths of Hong Kong to the Mainland provinces, regions and municipalities, please provide details on the respective activities taken forward by the Mainland Offices in the past year, particularly the activities pertinent to the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the Greater Bay Area development, as well as the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

One of the key functions of the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government is to organise various activities to promote the advantages of Hong Kong, including those brought by the “eight centres” positioning under the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the infinite opportunities arising from the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area). The Mainland Offices from time to time organise and participate in various types of promotional activities, including seminars, exhibitions, film festivals, concerts, gala dinners, etc. Moreover, the HKSAR Government has established the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre) in April 2023. Through further strengthening strategic co-operation with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, InvestHK and relevant Mainland organisations and institutions, the Promotion Centre organises different types of activities including seminars and study missions, etc. for Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, so as to promote the opportunities brought about by the Greater Bay Area development and to better understand their needs for providing them with practical assistance. At the same time, the Promotion Centre, through different forms of exchanges and promotional activities, encourages Mainland talents and enterprises to leverage Hong Kong’s unique advantages under “One Country, Two Systems” and pursue development in Hong Kong. The Promotion Centre also liaises with youth innovation and entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to provide appropriate support to young entrepreneurs from Hong Kong.

2. Since the promotional activities cover a wide range of themes, we do not keep a full and detailed statistical breakdown. The numbers of activities organised or participated in by the Mainland Offices in 2023 are as follows:

	Symposiums, exhibitions and seminars related to enhancing trade opportunities	Public relations/ cultural functions/events
Organised by the Mainland Offices	160	618
Participated in by the Mainland Offices	528	884

3. As the above work is an integral part of the work of the Mainland Offices, the provision required cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1038)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

On enhancing trade opportunities, the Mainland Offices organised 143 and 160 seminars, exhibitions and workshops, and participated in 470 and 528 seminars, exhibitions and workshops in 2022 and 2023 respectively. Please set out the themes of these seminars, exhibitions and workshops, particularly the themes pertinent to the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the Greater Bay Area development, as well as the expenditure on organising or participating in such events.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

The Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government and InvestHK under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) have been proactively serving as important bridges between Hong Kong and the Mainland, including enhancing liaison and communication with counterparts in the Mainland; promoting Hong Kong's trade and commercial advantages to encourage and attract investments to Hong Kong; promoting Hong Kong as a desirable platform to expand business along the Belt and Road; promoting the advantages of Hong Kong brought by the "eight centres" positioning under the National 14th Five-Year Plan; promoting the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area development; and gathering information on new laws and regulations, policies and significant regional developments of the Mainland and disseminating such information to the Hong Kong business sector through various channels. Moreover, the Mainland Offices and InvestHK proactively reach out to Mainland enterprises of potential, and provide one-stop information and enquiry services, so as to assist these enterprises in conducting visits to Hong Kong or setting up or expanding their business in Hong Kong.

2. Since the Mainland Offices' promotional work on enhancing trade opportunities covers a wide spectrum of areas, we do not keep a detailed statistical breakdown of the promotional work but some of the activities organised by the Mainland Offices in first half of 2023-24 are set out for reference. For example, the Beijing Office organised "Trade Seminar: Integration into the National Development – New Opportunities for Hong Kong

Enterprises” in Beijing in July 2023; “Seminar on Unparalleled Opportunities to Expand Your Global Business – Xinjiang-Hong Kong Investment Promotion Seminar” in Urumqi of Xinjiang in August 2023; and the “Hello, POP Hong Kong!” roving exhibition in Tianjin in August 2023, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (ETO) in Guangdong organised the hybrid “Seminar on the Development Trend of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” in Guangzhou in August 2023; and “GBA iForum cum Dinner in Dongguan” in Dongguan in January 2024, the Shanghai ETO organised “2023 Shanghai-Hong Kong Cooperation and Development Forum” in Shanghai in November 2023, the Chengdu ETO organised the “Shaanxi-Hong Kong Cooperation Offers Unlimited Opportunities” Business Seminar in Xi’an in January 2024, and the Wuhan ETO organised the Seminar on “Seizing New Opportunities in Hong Kong and Exploring New Business Opportunities Overseas” in Zhengzhou in September 2023, etc.

3. As organising the above activities is an integral part of the work of the Mainland Offices, the provision required cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB013**

**(Question Serial No. 1039)**

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  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding intra-racial discrimination, the proposed legislative amendment was submitted by the Equal Opportunities Commission in 2021. Please advise of the legislative progress.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Government has all along been committed to building a harmonious, inclusive and caring society. The Government also reviews the protection and implementation of the existing anti-discrimination ordinances from time to time to ensure that they meet the needs of society. With the full resumption of normal travel after the epidemic last year, Mainland and Hong Kong residents promptly resumed frequent exchanges, and the overall sentiment in society is peaceful and harmonious. When the Panel on Constitutional Affairs of the Legislative Council deliberated the relevant issue in February this year, some Members indicated that the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) should strengthen promotion of social inclusion through publicity and education, while resorting to legislative means, which may instead lead to social division or rifts, may not be necessary under the current situation. The Government and EOC respect such views and agree that the most appropriate approach is to foster closer bonds and mutual respect between residents of the two places through publicity and education. In this regard, the Government will continue to support EOC in fostering its publicity, promotional and public educational efforts and proactively conveying the positive messages of mutual respect, diversity and inclusion, with a view to safeguarding harmony and stability together. As the relevant work is an integral part of the work of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau and EOC, the expenditure incurred (including staff costs) cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB014**

**(Question Serial No. 1040)**

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

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

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The complaint cases concluded by the Equal Opportunities Commission within 6 months accounted for 86% in 2022, and the percentage increased to 90% in 2023. Please explain why the percentage is expected to drop to 80% in 2024.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

When formulating the relevant projected figures, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) mainly takes into consideration the expected number of complaint cases during the concerned period, the complexity involved, and the time required for mediation between relevant parties, etc. to make an estimate. The EOC will pay close heed to the actual situation and flexibly deploy manpower to handle relevant work in light of the actual needs, so as to ensure that the work will proceed smoothly and the expected goals are achieved.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB015**

**(Question Serial No. 1041)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The numbers of active cases of the Equal Opportunities Commission were 243 and 310 as at end-2022 and end-2023 respectively, and the number is expected to further increase to 350 in end-2024. Please advise what measures are put in place by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau and the Equal Opportunities Commission to avoid a further backlog of cases.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

In 2023, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) received 1 050 complaint cases, an increase of 20% from the 873 cases in 2022. Furthermore, most of the new cases were received during the latter half of 2023, leading to a higher number of active cases remaining at year-end.

2. When estimating the relevant figures of 2024, EOC mainly takes into consideration the expected number of complaint cases during the concerned period, the complexity involved, and the time required for mediation between relevant parties, etc. to make an estimate. The EOC will closely keep in view the actual workload and flexibly deploy manpower to handle relevant work in light of the actual needs, so as to ensure that the work will proceed smoothly. The Government will also closely monitor the situation, and when necessary urge EOC to take appropriate measures to alleviate the situation.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB016**

**(Question Serial No. 1042)**

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

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

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The number of promotional/training activities (visits/seminars/drama performances/training activities) of the Equal Opportunities Commission was 960 in 2022, and the number decreased to 820 in 2023 and is expected to further drop to 620 in 2024. Meanwhile, the number of audience is expected to decrease from 102 500 in 2022 to 43 500. Please provide reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) earlier reviewed the approach of staging drama performances. In order to conduct promotional activities more effectively, since the 2023/24 school year, the EOC has been gradually developing online educational modules to replace drama performances conducted at schools, and therefore the relevant indicators have decreased. The EOC considers that the new approach of using online educational modules would enable more students to receive the messages of equal opportunities as well as diversity and inclusion inside and beyond the classroom in a more flexible way. The EOC plans to distribute the online educational modules to about 600 primary schools for use in the 2024/25 school year, potentially reaching over 330 000 students.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB017**

**(Question Serial No. 1043)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the establishment of a mandatory data breach notification mechanism, the Privacy Commissioner indicated in February last year that advice would be sought from the Panel on Constitutional Affairs in the second quarter of last year, but no consultation has been conducted yet. Please advise on the legislative timetable.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

At present, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) is comprehensively reviewing the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Ordinance) and formulating concrete proposals for legislative amendments, which include establishing a mandatory personal data breach notification mechanism, requiring data users to formulate policies on personal data retention period, empowering the Privacy Commissioner to impose administrative fines, direct regulation of data processors, and clarifying the definition of personal data, etc. The PCPD is studying in detail relevant laws and experience of other jurisdictions, while taking account of the actual situation in Hong Kong so as to put forward practicable legislative amendment proposals to align with international developments in privacy protection and strengthen the protection of personal data privacy. In regard to the mandatory personal data breach notification mechanism, the definition of personal data breach incident, the threshold and timeframe for notification, etc. need to be considered. Such relevant work is being proactively taken forward at the moment. Once specific legislative amendment proposals are firmed up, the PCPD will consult the Government and the Legislative Council, after which a legislative amendment timetable will be drawn up having regard to actual circumstances.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB018**

**(Question Serial No. 1044)**

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

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

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

1. As regards investigation officers of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, what were the establishment and expenditure on emoluments in 2022 and 2023? What was the number of criminal investigation officers responsible for combating doxxing-related acts?
2. On exercising continuously the enforcement powers under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance to combat doxxing acts, is there a plan in 2024 to expand the establishment of investigation officers and increase the estimated expenditure to protect public officers from being doxxed in the discharge of their duties?
3. What were the average numbers of days for investigations initiated and investigations completed in 2022 and 2023 respectively?
4. On criminal investigations on doxxing-related acts, what are the new indicators as from 2024?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) has all along been exercising powers under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Ordinance) to conduct investigations on alleged violations of the Ordinance (including doxxing acts), so as to protect personal data privacy. The staff establishment of investigation officers under the PCPD includes Personal Data Officers, Legal Counsels and Personal Data Assistants, and the total number of staff is 47. In 2022-23 and 2023-24 (as at end-February 2024), the expenditures on emoluments of the relevant investigation officers were \$30.64 million and \$33.15 million respectively. Among them, there are a total of 13 criminal investigation officers responsible for handling doxxing-related acts, and they are supported by the PCPD's Complaints Division.



2. In 2023, the PCPD handled a total of 756 doxxing cases (including cases uncovered by proactive online patrols and complaints received). The figure dropped by 57% when compared to 1 764 cases in 2022, indicating that the doxxing situation had improved thanks to PCPD's strenuous efforts in combating doxxing acts. In view of this, the PCPD currently has no plans on further expanding the staff establishment of investigation officers. The PCPD will continue to keep in view the law enforcement situation against doxxing acts and the work of investigation officers, to ensure the relevant work can be carried out effectively.

3. In 2022 and 2023, the numbers of doxxing cases where the PCPD initiated criminal investigations were 89 and 140 respectively, and the average time taken to complete the relevant investigation was 123 and 147 days.

4. As for the question on criminal investigation indicators concerning doxxing-related acts, such are new indicators introduced this year mainly to report on the situation of PCPD's relevant criminal investigation pursuant to the enactment of the Personal Data (Privacy) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021. In addition, the estimated numbers of cases initiated and completed in 2024 are both less than that of the actual figures in 2023, which is mainly due to the anticipated alleviation of the relevant doxxing situation in 2024 thanks to PCPD's strengthened efforts in promotion and enforcement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB019**

**(Question Serial No. 1045)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: Not specified  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Under Subhead 000 Operational expenses, there is a relatively substantial increase in both Civil Service Provident Fund contribution and disturbance allowance. Please explain why.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The estimated expenditure on Civil Service Provident Fund (CSPF) contribution of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau for 2024-25 is higher than that for 2023-24, and this is mainly due to a projected increase in the number of officers to be appointed on new permanent terms (namely officers under the CSPF Scheme). Moreover, other factors (including the fact that the rate of the Government's voluntary contribution will progressively go up with the staff's length of service and salary increments arising from promotion and according to years of service) also account for an increase in CSPF contribution.

2. As for the increase in disturbance allowance, it is mainly because individual civil service posts of the Mainland Offices were left vacant for a period of time without replacement arrangement in 2023-24 (under such circumstances, the Offices normally, in the interim, employ suitable non-civil service staff on a short-term contract basis to temporarily take up relevant work to avoid affecting service delivery, and the employment of these non-civil service staff does not incur the expenditure on disturbance allowance), and hence the expenditure involved is lower than the original estimate. In 2024-25, we will, in light of the operational needs and actual circumstances of the Mainland Offices, deploy civil servants to fill relevant posts. As such, there is a projected increase in the estimated expenditure on disturbance allowance.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****CMAB020****(Question Serial No. 3236)**Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs BureauSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan OfficesControlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland AffairsQuestion:

1. Please set out the staff establishment, expenditure on emoluments and total expenditure of the Beijing Office and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices in Guangdong, Shanghai, Chengdu and Wuhan in 2023-24.
2. Further to the question above, please set out the staff establishment and estimated expenditure of each Mainland Office in the next financial year.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)Reply:

The staff establishment and expenditure of the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government in 2023-24 and 2024-25 are set out in the table below:

Office	2023-24		2024-25	
	Staff establishment	Revised estimated expenditure (\$ million)	Staff establishment	Estimated expenditure (\$ million)
Beijing Office	22	88.69	22	89.39
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong	18	82.22	18	88.29
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Shanghai	15	70.10	15	69.47
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Chengdu	13	51.99	13	51.60
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan	13	48.49	13	50.12

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB021**

**(Question Serial No. 3237)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

1. Please provide the number of requests for assistance from Hong Kong people received by the Beijing Office and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices in Guangdong, Shanghai, Chengdu and Wuhan in the past year.
2. Further to the question above, is there a categorisation of requests for assistance from Hong Kong people received by the Mainland Offices? If so, what issues are generally involved as regards the requests for assistance received by the Mainland Offices?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The numbers of requests for assistance from Hong Kong people received by the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government in 2023 are set out in the table below:

Office	Assistance cases which were related to immigration and personal safety matters	Other assistance cases	Total
Beijing Office	84	15	99
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong	225	60	285
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Shanghai	75	21	96
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Chengdu	27	4	31
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan	17	18	35

2. “Assistance cases which were related to immigration and personal safety matters” refer to emergency assistance in relation to accidents (e.g. traffic accidents or fire) or other emergencies (e.g. robbery, assault, etc.), while “Other assistance cases” in general include commercial and trade disputes, complaints relating to real estate, and complaints against authorities in the Mainland, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB022**

**(Question Serial No. 3238)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Please provide, by region and level of study, the number of Hong Kong students studying at Mainland higher education institutions and research institutes as at February 2024.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Education, as at December 2022, 21 519 Hong Kong students were studying at higher education institutions and research institutes in the Mainland. A breakdown of the figures by region and level of study is set out at **Annex**. The Ministry of Education has not yet provided the latest relevant figures.

**Number of Hong Kong students studying at  
higher education institutions and research institutes in the Mainland  
(as at December 2022)**

<b>Province/Municipality/ Autonomous Region</b>	<b>Post-secondary Programme</b>	<b>Bachelor's Programme</b>	<b>Master's Programme</b>	<b>Doctoral Programme</b>
Beijing	0	1 283	882	157
Tianjin	1	148	8	4
Hebei	0	14	0	0
Shanxi	0	3	0	0
Inner Mongolia	0	1	0	0
Liaoning	0	57	1	3
Jilin	0	42	4	0
Heilongjiang	0	35	5	1
Shanghai	4	649	231	156
Jiangsu	7	635	50	25
Zhejiang	5	397	59	14
Anhui	3	13	2	1
Fujian	122	2 610	192	48
Jiangxi	3	326	8	58
Shandong	0	198	4	3
Henan	0	47	0	0
Hubei	9	698	86	119
Hunan	20	396	47	5
Guangdong	421	8 643	868	520
Guangxi	14	108	8	0
Hainan	8	20	3	0
Chongqing	9	328	14	1
Sichuan	12	388	58	4
Guizhou	0	6	0	0
Yunnan	2	30	4	0
Shaanxi	0	128	8	3
Gansu	0	11	0	0
Qinghai	0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>17 214</b>	<b>2 543</b>	<b>1 122</b>

Note: The above information was provided by the Ministry of Education.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB023**

**(Question Serial No. 3241)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

1. Please set out the activities organised by the Government to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law in the past year.
2. What is the estimated expenditure for the Government's promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law in the next financial year?
3. Further to the question above, how will the Government promote the Constitution and the Basic Law in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has been carrying out promotion and publicity work through different means and in a diversified manner to enable the public to have a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. Key promotional activities in the past year include:

- (a) organising the 2023 Constitution Day Seminar;
- (b) using electronic means, online platforms and social media to promote widely to different strata of society, e.g. posting advertisements on social media for promotion of the videos on the Constitution and the Basic Law, designing online games, and co-producing different types of television programmes with the Radio Television Hong Kong to introduce the Constitution and the Basic Law in an easy-to-understand manner, such as "Talk About Basic Law With Photo" and the series of "Root & Origin: The Constitution";
- (c) displaying large publicity banners outdoors, and producing publicity leaflets and posters on "One Country, Two Systems" for distribution to schools, public housing estates, etc.;



- (d) enhancing awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law by the general public and students through promotional activities at the district level (e.g. organising roving exhibitions and parent-child workshops at shopping centres in various districts, and arranging the mobile resource centre and the mobile game booth to pay visits to different districts and schools); and
- (e) providing sponsorship to non-governmental organisations or community organisations through the “Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme” for staging various promotional and research activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as promotion ambassador training schemes, speaking contests, quizzes and slogan design competitions, in order to get across the messages in the community.

2. In the coming year, the CMAB will continue to, in line with the promotion strategy formulated by the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC), conduct promotion work in a diversified manner, including making good use of various media, producing informative programmes and launching fun activities at the district level, etc., so as to enhance awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law among the public. In the 2024-25 financial year, the estimated expenditure of the CMAB for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law is about \$26 million.

3. In addition to the CMAB, other bureaux and departments have also actively promoted the Constitution and the Basic Law to sectors under their purview. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the CBLPSC is responsible for co-ordinating the work of various government departments in promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law. The CBLPSC and its 5 working groups (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong Kong) will continue to plan and organise various types of activities to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law on various fronts to the general public and related sectors.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB024**

**(Question Serial No. 3261)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law is a vital task, and the most effective way is to conduct promotion work at schools. Yet, for the young people who have graduated, how can the Government step up promotion targeting them? Would the Government advise of the following:

1. What is the total number of activities, excluding those at schools, organised by the Government to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law in 2023-24?
2. In promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law, has the Government organised activities that target young people not studying at school?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

To promote the Constitution and the Basic Law among young people, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) have made a great deal of efforts, including organising Basic Law Quiz Competition, Basic Law Seminar and Civic Education Exhibition, producing Civic Education Calendar, sponsoring eligible local organisations to organise activities to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law, organising permanent and thematic exhibitions, providing relevant reference materials in the Civic Education Resource Centre, and disseminating information through CPCE's parent-child magazine, its website and social media platforms, etc.

2. In addition, the Security Bureau as well as various disciplined and auxiliary services have been continuously promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law to their youth uniformed groups, including organising thematic talks on the Constitution and the Basic Law to strengthen youth members' national identity and law-abiding awareness, and planning to promote national security education to about 20 000 participants from youth uniformed groups under disciplined services in 2024, with a view to enhancing the national security awareness among young people.

3. The HKSAR Government's promotion work on the Constitution and the Basic Law involves the participation of various bureaux and departments, hence, no breakdown statistical figures on the activities are available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB025**

**(Question Serial No. 0391)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau is responsible for promoting public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law, and it is learnt that the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme (Sponsorship Scheme) aims to enhance public understanding of and support for the Constitution, the Basic Law, the Hong Kong National Security Law and the “One Country, Two Systems” principle. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The total amount of sponsorship, number of participants, and relevant information of sponsored projects (including but not limited to applicant, name and progress of a project) of the Sponsorship Scheme in 2023-24.
2. Are there follow-up actions and reviews on the effectiveness of the above-mentioned sponsored projects to provide reference for future assessment of applications?
3. Has a review been conducted to examine whether the amount of sponsorship is sufficient for each community organisation to fully take forward its activity or research? If yes, what are the details, and what other measures are available to support relevant organisations in successfully conducting or completing their activities or research?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

In 2023-24, the total amount of sponsorship of the “Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme” is \$8,242,835, and the number of participants is about 148 000. Relevant sponsorship details are at Annex.

2. For the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the progress and effectiveness of sponsored projects, sponsored organisations are required to submit the progress reports,

project final report and financial report on time. The project final report should state if the number of participants is in line with expectations and participants' feedback on the project (e.g. report on participants' responses), and attach project deliverables (e.g. winning entries of competitions, learning materials, and photos or videos of activities). The secretariat will disburse funds to the organisation concerned only upon confirmation that the project has been completed with the targets met. Sponsored organisations' performance in previous projects will be considered in the assessment of their future applications.

3. On the amount of sponsorship, an organisation may apply according to needs, while the maximum amount of sponsorship for each project is HK\$800,000. When determining the specific amount of sponsorship, the Vetting Committee responsible for assessing applications will consider whether the project content and the estimated funding are consistent with the Guide to Application as well as reasonable and feasible, and also make reference to the actual expenditure incurred by similar projects.

Details of the sponsored activity projects in 2023-24 are set out below:

Name of organisation	Title of project
Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Constitution and Hong Kong Basic Law	《基本法》多面體—全港學生辯論賽系列 2023-2024*
Chung Yeh Yuk Tsoi Educational Organisation Company Limited	The 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hong Kong Young Leaders in Law Training Scheme
Youth · Travel	「《基本法》與我」香港中小學生海報設計比賽 2023-2024*
New Home Association Kowloon West Service Center	Basic Law Community Ambassador Program
Basic Law Foundation Limited	2023年12月「國家憲法日」電車廣告推廣活動*
Hongkong Shine Tak Foundation Association Limited	善德基金會「一國兩制」教育計劃 2023*
Hong Kong Commerce & Industry Association LTD	第三屆《中學生電台節目製作基本法》*
Hongkong Young Historian Institute Limited	「回到制憲現場」憲法及基本法香港青年培訓項目*
鳳凰薈 <sup>^</sup>	「國家安全『PLAY · STEM · LEARN』」計劃*
To Kwa Wan Resident Service Organisation	《香港國安法》社區推廣計劃 2023*
Rudolf Steiner Education Foundation Hong Kong Maria College	Basic Law Quiz & Speed Stacks Competition 2023
Hong Kong Basic Law Foundation Limited	2 <sup>nd</sup> Basic Law Speech Contest (Cantonese and Putonghua)
Hong Kong Life Extension Association	「考基本、尋法寶」《基本法》推廣活動 2023-2024*
Basic Law Foundation Limited	2024年4月「《基本法頒布紀念日》」電車推廣廣告活動*
International Probono Legal Services Association Limited	National Security Elite Training Program
Hong Kong Youth Nurture Association	「一國兩制」與《基本法》標語創作比賽 2024*
Chin Ching Association	「識」「晰」相關--基本法推廣計劃*
Hongkong Shine Tak Foundation Association Limited	慶祝中華人民共和國成立75周年：善德基金會「認識憲法、《基本法》—與法治同行」系列比賽*

Name of organisation	Title of project
Kowloon West Community Harmony and Solidarity Services Centre Limited	「憲」為「基本」之母*
Joint Committee for the Promotion of The Constitution and Hong Kong Basic Law	Basic Law Ambassador Training Scheme

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

^ The organisation in question only has a Chinese name.

Details of the sponsored research projects in 2023-24 are set out below:

Research organisation	Subject of research
Path of Democracy Limited	探討香港市民對《香港基本法》保障人的權利及相應之義務的認識程度*
Hong Kong Policy Research Institute Ltd.	Case studies related to the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law
Hong Kong Huaxia Education Institute Limited	The Linkage between Patriotic Education and the “Three Laws” Education: A Case Study of Traditional Patriotic Schools
Basic Law Foundation Limited	Research on Situation of Community Education of the Hong Kong Basic Law and Chinese Constitution in the Hong Kong 18 Districts

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

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB026**

**(Question Serial No. 0392)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

On providing support for Hong Kong residents in the Mainland, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The number of Hong Kong residents in various Mainland provinces (including but not limited to the Guangdong Province), disaggregated by (a) gender, (b) age group and (c) occupation or economic activity undertaken, in the past year. Please explain why if statistics on provinces and municipalities other than the Guangdong Province cannot be provided.
2. Regarding the Government's work to "provide information and other appropriate support to Hong Kong residents in the Mainland", please set out the specific initiatives launched in various provinces and municipalities, as well as the manpower and expenditure involved in the past year. For the coming year, what will be done to ensure the Government's work to support Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland and so forth remains effective?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

According to the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD)'s information, the statistics on Hong Kong residents usually staying in the Guangdong Province in 2022-23<sup>1</sup> by gender and age group are set out at Annex. Since the relevant statistics do not provide a breakdown by occupation or by participation in economic activities, the relevant figures are not available. Besides, as the scope of the above statistical compilation is limited to the Guangdong Province only, there are no statistics on other Mainland cities and provinces. The HKSAR Government will continue to monitor the living and development situations and

---

<sup>1</sup> The relevant statistics were compiled at the end of 2022 covering the six-month period beforehand and thereafter, i.e. from Jul 2022 to Jun 2023. Hence, they belong to the statistics of 2022-23.



needs of the Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland, and consider in due course collecting and compiling other information and data for policy research, having regard to the actual circumstances and needs.

2. All along, the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government have been striving to maintain close liaison with associations, chambers of commerce, enterprises and student groups of Hong Kong people in the area to understand their working, studying and living situations, and provide appropriate assistance as required. The Mainland Offices also convey the living and development needs of Hong Kong people to the Mainland authorities and strive for the full implementation of facilitation measures for Hong Kong people. In terms of supporting Hong Kong people and businessmen, the Mainland Offices organise trade seminars, investment promotion meetings, career talks for students, and offer support and sponsorship to the activities organised by associations of Hong Kong people (such as cultural events, annual dinners, visits and orientation activities for universities) as appropriate. In addition, to assist Hong Kong people to better adapt to local life, the Mainland Offices have compiled booklets of practical information on everyday life and publish the electronic version on their websites and social media platforms. Furthermore, the Mainland Offices have been proactively serving as important bridges between Hong Kong and the Mainland, including enhancing communication and liaison with counterparts in the Mainland, and disseminating information on new laws and regulations, policies and significant regional developments in the Mainland to the Hong Kong business sector through giving public speeches, media interviews and briefings, issuing information circulars, newsletters and press releases, etc.

3. In 2024-25, the Mainland Offices will continue to strengthen the above work. As supporting Hong Kong people and enterprises in the Mainland is an integral part of the work of the Mainland Offices, the manpower and provision required cannot be singled out and itemised. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the work of the Mainland Offices from time to time, and make appropriate arrangements and adjustments when necessary to achieve the best results.

**Statistics on Hong Kong residents usually staying in the Guangdong Province  
in 2022-23<sup>1</sup> by sex and age group**

Reference time-point	Sex	Age group					Total
		0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	
End-2022	Male	81 800	30 200	44 800	70 800	53 500	281 100
	Female	66 000	27 200	38 500	57 800	34 500	223 900
	Sub-total	147 700	57 500	83 200	128 600	88 000	505 000

Note:

The figures above refer to the number of Hong Kong permanent residents who have stayed in the Guangdong Province for 6 months and above during the 1-year period from 6 months before the reference time-point to 6 months after the reference time-point. Figures may not add up to the total due to rounding. Statistics of 2023 are still under compilation.

[https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web\\_table.html?id=115-01031&param=N4IgxgbiBcoMJwJqJqAjDEAxADCANCAPoAuRmehRADudGgL6EDKAogBqogbQgDMBYmUwAmQTTto4mIAIIBxVlwAsmAGrjhvMvVowphABJce-DXRCViu+g2kbnKLct0RhgnIAIOQAUYAbRAPAEMAdxoAUwAnIga7EABdaQAbGBJIgFdwhiA#](https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/web_table.html?id=115-01031&param=N4IgxgbiBcoMJwJqJqAjDEAxADCANCAPoAuRmehRADudGgL6EDKAogBqogbQgDMBYmUwAmQTTto4mIAIIBxVlwAsmAGrjhvMvVowphABJce-DXRCViu+g2kbnKLct0RhgnIAIOQAUYAbRAPAEMAdxoAUwAnIga7EABdaQAbGBJIgFdwhiA#)

---

<sup>1</sup> The relevant statistics were compiled at the end of 2022 covering the six-month period beforehand and thereafter, i.e. from Jul 2022 to Jun 2023. Hence, they belong to the statistics of 2022-23.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3071)**

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

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

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned under the Programme that Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 include strengthening co-operation with the relevant organisations and institutions, and promoting opportunities brought about by Greater Bay Area development and providing appropriate assistance to Hong Kong people and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area through the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre. In this regard, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the specific work of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre since its establishment, and what are the manpower and expenditure involved?
2. Have the Mainland Offices conducted surveys or engaged in relevant work on Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. To better support Hong Kong people and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, will the Mainland Offices plan to conduct comprehensive surveys to obtain a thorough and in-depth understanding of the expectations of Hong Kong people and enterprises? If so, what are the estimated manpower and expenditure involved? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre), which officially came into operation in April 2023, is mainly responsible for further enhancing publicity and promotion in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area), as well as providing support for Hong Kong residents and enterprises there. In 2023-24, the Promotion Centre actively organised and participated in various types of activities on Greater Bay Area development, which mainly include:

- (a) Seminars and exhibitions – On the day of its inception in April last year, the Promotion Centre jointly organised the “GoGBA Greater Bay Area Development Day” seminar with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office and the Guangzhou Office of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, during which successful entrepreneurs and start-ups shared their experiences and exchanged views with participants on how to capitalise on the huge opportunities arising from Greater Bay Area development. Thereafter in 2023, the Promotion Centre organised seminars in different Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to enable participants to seize the business opportunities and expand their business networks, with each event attracting hundreds of participants.
- (b) Exchange activities for young people – the Promotion Centre has, as an ongoing effort, conducted visits to and exchanges with Hong Kong-Macao youth innovation and entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area. The Promotion Centre also organised a number of sharing sessions on youth innovation and entrepreneurship in different Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, which were well received by Hong Kong young people interested in pursuing development in the Greater Bay Area.
- (c) Study missions to the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area – the Promotion Centre has, on a number of occasions, assisted and arranged various Hong Kong organisations and groups to conduct visits to the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, and arranged for the delegates to meet with representatives from local governments and enterprises. For example, in end-2023, the Promotion Centre assisted a business delegation of enterprises of Belt and Road countries operating in Hong Kong to visit Guangzhou and Shenzhen so as to enhance delegates’ understanding of the huge business opportunities in the Greater Bay Area.

2. At present, 5 staff members have been deployed for the work of the Promotion Centre. For 2023-24, the revised estimated expenditure of the Promotion Centre is \$6.68 million.

3. All along, the Mainland Offices (including the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government have been striving to maintain close liaison with associations, chambers of commerce, enterprises and student groups of Hong Kong people in the area (including the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area) to understand their working, studying and living situations, and provide appropriate assistance as required. The Mainland Offices also convey the living and development needs of Hong Kong people to the Mainland authorities and strive for the full implementation of facilitation measures for Hong Kong people. The HKSAR Government will continue to monitor the living and development situations and needs of the Hong Kong residents living in the Mainland, and consider in due course collecting and compiling other information and data for policy research, having regard to the actual circumstances and needs. As supporting Hong Kong people and enterprises in the Mainland is an integral part of the work of the Mainland Offices, the manpower and provision required cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB028**

**(Question Serial No. 1376)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau has set up Mainland Offices in Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Chengdu and Wuhan. Apart from enhancing liaison with the Mainland, these Offices also serve to promote the business opportunities in Hong Kong, attract enterprises and investment, etc. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- a) What are the details of the events, briefing sessions, etc. organised by these Offices in their respective regions for promoting Hong Kong in 2023-24?
- b) Upon conclusion of the events, will the Government establish direct contact with the local enterprises and organisations and further follow up on the work of attracting enterprises and investment?
- c) Have these Offices maintained liaison with the Department of Commerce and other local government organs on a regular basis? What are the details?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

One of the key functions of the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government is to organise various activities to promote the advantages of Hong Kong, in particular those brought by the “eight centres” positioning under the National 14th Five-Year Plan. The Mainland Offices proactively promote Hong Kong’s different advantages to various sectors in the Mainland, and from time to time organise and participate in various types of promotional activities, including seminars, exhibitions, film festivals, concerts, gala dinners, etc.

2. The Mainland Offices organised a number of activities in 2023-24. For example, the Beijing Office organised “Trade Seminar: Integration into the National Development – New Opportunities for Hong Kong Enterprises” in Beijing in July 2023; “Seminar on Unparalleled

Opportunities to Expand Your Global Business – Xinjiang-Hong Kong Investment Promotion Seminar” in Urumqi of Xinjiang in August 2023; and the “Hello, POP Hong Kong!” roving exhibition in Tianjin in August 2023, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (ETO) in Guangdong organised the hybrid “Seminar on the Development Trend of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” in Guangzhou in August 2023; and “GBA iForum cum Dinner in Dongguan” in Dongguan in January 2024, the Shanghai ETO organised “2023 Shanghai-Hong Kong Cooperation and Development Forum” in Shanghai in November 2023. The Chengdu ETO organised the “Shaanxi-Hong Kong Cooperation Offers Unlimited Opportunities” Business Seminar in Xi’an in January 2024, and the Wuhan ETO organised the Seminar on “Seizing New Opportunities in Hong Kong and Exploring New Business Opportunities Overseas” in Zhengzhou in September 2023, etc. The numbers of activities organised or participated in by the Mainland Offices in 2023 are as follows:

	Symposiums, exhibitions and seminars related to enhancing trade opportunities	Public relations/ cultural functions/events
Organised by the Mainland Offices	160	618
Participated in by the Mainland Offices	528	884

3. For the Mainland Offices, organising promotional activities is an important channel for establishing networks. Upon conclusion of the activities, these Offices maintain close liaison with the participating enterprises and organisations, and take follow-up actions. Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in the Mainland Offices provide support to the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES) under the Financial Secretary and InvestHK under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau by proactively reaching out to target enterprises in the Mainland, assisting target enterprises in implementing their plan to set up or expand business in Hong Kong through corporate visits, business discussions and promotional activities, and referring them to OASES or InvestHK in a timely manner for further follow-up.

4. Another key function of the Mainland Offices is to maintain liaison and communication with various levels of government in the Mainland in order to get abreast of the latest development at the national and local level, to reflect the concerns and wishes of Hong Kong people and enterprises in the Mainland as well as to discuss with the Mainland authorities on providing appropriate assistance to Hong Kong people and enterprises in distress in the Mainland as and when required. Serving as our goal to further strengthen co-operation and liaison with the Mainland authorities, we have set key performance indicators in the 2022 Policy Address where the Mainland Offices will organise no less than 3 200 visits to Mainland authorities or bodies in 2024, and this indicator is expected to increase by 5% in 2025. At present, such work is in good progress, and the Mainland Offices had organised 3 135 visits to Mainland authorities or bodies in 2023.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB029**

**(Question Serial No. 1377)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau established the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) on 23 November 2020 to further promote and co-ordinate the work of the HKSAR Government in taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area. In 2024-25, the Government aims to continue to strengthen the promotion and co-ordination work in taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area through the Office.

In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What channels are used by the Office to promote and publicise information about the Greater Bay Area to Hong Kong residents?
2. Has the Office separately organised exchange and networking activities for different professions and sectors (e.g. legal, accounting, innovation and technology, and construction) in the Greater Bay Area? If so, what are the details? If not, will the Office consider organising such activities in 2024-25?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) has strived to make use of diversified and multi-media means and channels, including traditional media, the Internet and social media platforms such as its thematic website and WeChat official account, as well as physical activities and exhibitions etc., to promote the significant opportunities of the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area) to local, Mainland and overseas stakeholders. In addition, the Office has set up the "Greater Bay Area Information Station" in all 18 districts of Hong Kong to provide the public with multi-media information about pursuing development and living in the Greater Bay Area through an easy-to-use digital information platform. In collaboration with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), the Office has launched and

continuously optimised the “GoGBA” digital platform, which provides support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises interested in tapping into the Mainland market of the Greater Bay Area. At the same time, the Office has co-organised with HKTDC a number of “GoGBA Development Day” events in Hong Kong and the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area every year which feature theme-based briefings about the huge opportunities in the Greater Bay Area.

2. In addition, the Office also maintains close liaison with consulates in Hong Kong, chambers of commerce of various sectors, professional bodies, youth associations, think-tanks etc. Through organising and participating in online and offline symposiums, seminars and forums, the Office elucidates to these organisations and stakeholders the significance of Greater Bay Area development to Hong Kong.

3. Moreover, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government also established the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre) in April 2023. Through further strengthening strategic co-operation with HKTDC, Invest Hong Kong and relevant Mainland organisations and institutions, the Promotion Centre organises different types of activities including seminars and study missions, etc. for Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, so as to promote the opportunities brought about by Greater Bay Area development and to better understand their needs for providing them with practical assistance. At the same time, the Promotion Centre, through different forms of exchanges and promotional activities, encourages Mainland talents and enterprises to leverage Hong Kong’s unique advantages under “One Country, Two Systems” and pursue development in Hong Kong. The Promotion Centre also liaises with youth innovation and entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to provide appropriate support to young entrepreneurs from Hong Kong.

4. In 2024-25, the Office and Promotion Centre will continue to proactively engage with different sectors and effectively take forward the work on promotion, publicity and networking.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB030**

**(Question Serial No. 1390)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding Programme (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, it is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention that promoting equal opportunities principles is key to ensuring progress and achievement for the whole society, and advocate education and employment opportunities and access to services for disadvantaged racial communities and persons with disabilities. In recent years, with the increasing number of ethnic minorities living in Hong Kong, there are more non-Chinese speaking students and more ethnic minorities in need of support. In this regard, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

Will the Government formulate policies to support the employment of ethnic minorities in the private market? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Will the Government consider allocating more resources to alleviate poverty among ethnic minorities? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to advance equal opportunities for the disadvantaged and marginalised communities, in an effort to build a caring and equal society. For example, in promoting equal opportunities for ethnic minorities (EMs), EOC has continued to advocate through various channels the measures for improving the learning of Chinese as a second language among EM students, and organised the first Racially Friendly Campus Recognition Scheme in 2023. In terms of employment, EOC has launched the Racial Diversity and Inclusion Charter for Employers, which provides best practices to help organisations remove barriers in their employment policies for staff and job seekers, cultivate employees' cultural awareness

of inclusion and equality, sensitivity and acceptance towards EMs, and establish a racially inclusive environment for employees, etc.

2. As regards promoting equal opportunities in education for persons with disabilities (PWDs), EOC launched a series of online teaching materials in 2023 in response to the growing number of university students with special educational needs (SEN) in recent years. The materials were designed to enhance tertiary students' understanding of students with SEN, thereby helping them integrate into campus. As for improving the employment situation of PWDs, EOC has continued to encourage more employers to hire PWDs and act as the supporting organisation for the Disability Inclusion Index launched by CareER, a non-governmental organisation, and taking part in its Inclusive Recruitment Fair.

3. The Government has all along been fostering EMs' integration into the community through services and support provided by various bureaux and departments. EMs who meet the eligibility criteria of different social welfare and public services have equal access to the relevant services. The Government will continue to foster an equal, caring and inclusive society. As regards the resource and expenditure on supporting EMs, since the respective support and policy measures are implemented by the respective bureaux and departments, the Government does not possess relevant aggregated data.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB031**

**(Question Serial No. 2084)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) has taken on more tasks in recent years, including the work related to doxxing and cross-boundary data transfer etc. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The expenditure and manpower, with a breakdown by area of work, in each of the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24).
2. The estimated expenditure of the PCPD in 2024-25 is 3.6% higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. What are the areas involved in the increased expenditure? Will the Government consider allocating more resources to support the work of the PCPD? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. What are the divisions involved in combating doxxing acts, and what is the distribution of responsibilities?
4. What are the directions being considered, up-to-date progress and timetable for amending the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance?
5. What measures are in place to strengthen liaison as well as mutual collaboration and co-operation between the PCPD and other privacy protection authorities?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The expenditure and manpower allocation of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) (by area of work) in the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24) are at **Annex**.

2. In 2024-25, additional allocation to the PCPD was deployed mainly to strengthen its overall operations, including PCPD's work in combating doxxing offences, processing

complaints, handling personal data breach incidents, and promoting the protection of personal data privacy, etc. The Government will, in light of PCPD's actual needs, allocate resources as appropriate to support the work on protection of personal data privacy.

3. The work on combating doxxing acts involves different divisions of the PCPD, covering the work areas of compliance and enquiries, complaints and criminal investigation, legal services and support, corporate communications, etc. Upon receipt of doxxing-related complaints, the PCPD will actively take follow-up actions, including initiating criminal investigations, and when necessary, seek legal advice for deciding whether to institute prosecutions. Furthermore, the PCPD is committed to strengthening publicity and education work related to the combat of doxxing-related offences, so as to better protect personal data privacy.

4. At present, the PCPD is comprehensively reviewing the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Ordinance) and formulating concrete proposals for legislative amendments, which include establishing a mandatory personal data breach notification mechanism, requiring data users to formulate policies on personal data retention period, empowering the Privacy Commissioner to impose administrative fines, direct regulation of data processors, and clarifying the definition of personal data, etc. The PCPD is studying in detail relevant laws and experience of other jurisdictions, while taking account of the actual situation in Hong Kong so as to put forward practicable legislative amendment proposals to align with international developments in privacy protection and strengthen the protection of personal data privacy. Such relevant work is being proactively taken forward at the moment. Once specific legislative amendment proposals are firmed up, the PCPD will consult the Government and the Legislative Council, after which a legislative amendment timetable will be drawn up having regard to actual circumstances.

5. The PCPD has been actively participating in international and regional privacy organisations and networks, including the Global Privacy Assembly (GPA), Asia Pacific Privacy Authorities, Global Privacy Enforcement Network, etc., while maintaining close communication and collaboration with privacy protection authorities around the world. For example, the GPA is an international forum for over 130 global privacy protection authorities to mutually exchange views and collaborate on the latest international developments in privacy issues. The PCPD has actively engaged in various activities of the said organisations and networks, including attending regular meetings and sponsoring resolutions on topical privacy issues (e.g. the Resolution on Artificial Intelligence and Employment and the Resolution on Generative Artificial Intelligence Systems adopted at the annual conference of GPA in 2023). In tandem, the PCPD has strived to take part in the work of various working groups, including taking up the role as a co-chair of the International Enforcement Cooperation Working Group of the GPA since 2021 to put forward strategic recommendations on international enforcement initiatives. During the period, the Working Group also launched the "transnational case map", which provided an overview of the cases to GPA members on cross-border enforcement actions or co-operation concerning privacy-related matters, and hosted workshops for members to share their experience in law enforcement. Besides, the PCPD has signed Memorandums of Understanding with individual countries and regions including Singapore, the Philippines and the United Kingdom's privacy protection authorities, with a view to further strengthening mutual collaboration and exchanges.

**The recurrent expenditure and manpower allocation (by area of work) of PCPD**

Area of work	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24 (as at end- February 2024)	
	Recurrent expenditure* (\$ million)	Manpower allocation	Recurrent expenditure* (\$ million)	Manpower allocation	Recurrent expenditure* (\$ million)	Manpower allocation	Recurrent expenditure* (\$ million)	Manpower allocation	Recurrent expenditure* (\$ million)	Manpower allocation
<b>Compliance and enquiries</b>	14.9	18	14.5	20	13.3	15	12.2	15	12.3	21
<b>Complaints and criminal investigation</b>	14.3	17	16.6	22	18.3	23	24.9	31	25.7	32
<b>Legal</b>	7.6	6	9.5	8	8.6	8	8.2	8	8.2	9
<b>Global affairs and research</b>	4.5	5	3.6	4	4.0	7	4.4	5	5.5	7
<b>Corporate communications</b>	7.7	9	9	9	9.5	11	13.9	10	11.5	12
<b>Corporate support</b>	12.1	16	11.3	16	11.0	16	11.8	15	10.9	15

*\*including manpower expenditure*

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB032**

**(Question Serial No. 3117)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the work of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD), please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please tabulate, by case type, the brief description, results, enterprises/individuals involved, expenditure and manpower of investigations initiated by the PCPD in the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24).
2. Please tabulate, by type, the number of promotional and educational activities, number of participants, and expenditure and manpower involved in each of the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24).
3. Please tabulate the details, estimated expenditure and manpower of promotional and educational activities to be organised in 2024-25.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

From 2019-20 to 2023-24, the numbers of investigation cases initiated by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (PDPO) and the expenditure incurred (including manpower expenditure) are as below:

**(i) Criminal investigation concerning doxxing**

The PCPD's Criminal Investigation Division was set up in July 2021, and its relevant investigation, arrest and manpower expenditure data is as below:

Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at end-February 2024)
<b>No. of criminal investigation cases</b>	65	83	136
<b>No. of arrested persons</b>	1 person	19 persons	25 persons
<b>Expenditure</b>	\$5.6 million	\$11.8 million	\$12.5 million
<b>Manpower allocation</b>	10	13	13

(ii) **Non-criminal investigation cases concerning other contraventions to the PDPO and its Data Protection Principles**

Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at end-February 2024)
<b>No. of investigation cases</b>	61	50	96	116	103
<b>Expenditure</b>	\$26.3 million	\$27.7 million	\$24.6 million	\$24.7 million	\$24.9 million
<b>Manpower allocation</b>	29	35	24	30	35

The majority of the cases above involved possible contravention of the Data Protection Principles (DPP) under the PDPO on scenarios involving improper use and disclosure of personal data. The rest mainly involved contravention of other DPPs relating to improper collection of personal data, insufficient personal data security measures, and non-compliance with personal data access and correction requests. The data users in more than half of the cases were private organisations, while the rest were government departments, public organisations or individuals.

2. Relevant information on PCPD's promotional work and educational activities from 2019-20 to 2023-24 is as below:

Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (as at end-February 2024)
<b>Major promotional activities</b>					
No. of activities	21	9	19	20	21
No. of participants	393 239	223 987	2 044 254#	2 204 702#	2 222 140#
<b>Industry-specific privacy protection campaigns</b>					
No. of activities	1	1	3	5	5
No. of participants	2 575	1 950	4 634	4 041	2 302

<b>Talks, seminars and workshops</b>					
No. of activities	373	304	357	360	408
No. of participants	31 658	25 999	35 020	31 478	36 756
<b>Expenditure on promotional work and educational activities</b>	\$2 million	\$2.47 million	\$3.18 million	\$5.57 million	\$4.28 million
<b>Manpower allocation for promotional work and educational activities</b>	9	10	11	10	11

# Starting from 2021-22, the numbers of participants of the PCPD's major promotional activities have substantially increased. This is mainly because the PCPD has prioritised promotion on online social platforms, resulting in extensive coverage of the PCPD's promotional work. PCPD's promotion included the broadcasting of anti-doxxing offence publicity clips on online social platforms, animated publicity clips for children, and anti-fraud clips etc.

3. PCPD's promotional work and educational activities tentatively planned for and to be conducted in 2024-25 are as below:

<b>Major promotional activities</b>
Privacy Awareness Week
Student Ambassador for Privacy Protection Programme – Partnering Schools Recognition Scheme
Launch of an English book entitled “Personal Data (Privacy) Law in Hong Kong – A Practical Guide on Compliance (Third Edition)”
School Touring of Anti-doxxing Education Talks
Anti-fraud Promotional Campaign (including Elderly Campaign)
<b>Industry-specific privacy protection campaigns</b>
Organising events and speaking engagements for the social services, education and information technology sectors.
<b>Talks, seminars and workshops</b>
In-house seminars for organisations
Professional workshops
Seminars on the PDPO
Thematic seminars

The PCPD will deploy 11 staff members to be responsible for the relevant promotional work and educational activities, and the estimated expenditure is about \$5.17 million.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB033**

**(Question Serial No. 3293)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

On promoting public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The expenditure on promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law in the past 3 years, and the estimated expenditure on promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law in the 2024-25 financial year.
2. The respective manpower and expenditure for promoting public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law via television, radio, print advertisements and social media platforms on the Internet in the past 3 years.
3. The details of respective activities for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law to the local community, teachers and students, civil servants, the community outside Hong Kong, and the industrial, commercial and professional sectors etc. in the past 3 years.
4. Has the Government evaluated and reviewed the measures for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law and their effectiveness? How can the promotion and publicity strategy be optimised?
5. How does the Government assess if the target groups have acquired an accurate understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

The Constitution and the Basic Law together form the constitutional basis of the HKSAR, providing the strongest safeguard for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has been carrying out promotion and publicity work through different means and in a diversified manner to enable the public to have a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of the Constitution and

the Basic Law. Specific measures include making an extensive use of online platforms and social media to disseminate publicity information on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as posting advertisements on social media for promotion of the videos on the Constitution and the Basic Law; launching online games; and co-producing different types of television programmes with the Radio Television Hong Kong to introduce the Constitution and the Basic Law in an easy-to-understand manner, e.g. “Talk About Basic Law With Photo” and the series of “Root & Origin: The Constitution”. In addition, we have been displaying large publicity banners outdoors and producing publicity leaflets and posters on “One Country, Two Systems” for distribution to schools, public housing estates, etc., so as to promote widely to members of the public and students.

2. In the past 3 financial years (i.e. 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24), the actual expenditure of the CMAB for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law is about \$17 million, \$32 million and \$34 million (estimated actual expenditure) respectively. The expenditure of the past 2 financial years has substantially increased mainly because the CMAB has, in line with the enhanced promotion strategy formulated by the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC), augmented relevant promotion and publicity work through internal deployment of resources. As for the 2024-25 financial year, the estimated expenditure on relevant work is about \$26 million. The CMAB will, having regard to the actual circumstances, consider suitably devoting additional resources through internal deployment to conduct the promotion work.

3. The promotion work relating to the Constitution and the Basic Law via various media is an integral part of the work of the CMAB. As such, no breakdown figures in respect of the expenditure and manpower involved are available.

4. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the CBLPSC provides advice and steer on the overall strategy and key work plans for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law, and monitors, evaluates and reviews promotional programmes undertaken by government departments and non-governmental organisations. The CMAB provides secretariat support to the CBLPSC. The 5 working groups under the CBLPSC (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong Kong) are respectively assisted by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB), Education Bureau (EDB), Civil Service Bureau (CSB), Trade and Industry Department (TID) and Information Services Department (ISD) in planning and organising various types of activities to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law on various fronts to the general public and related sectors.

5. In the past 3 years, measures for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law targeting teachers and students, the local community, civil servants, industrial, commercial and professional sectors, as well as the community outside Hong Kong include the following:

- Teachers and students: In regard to primary and secondary schools, the EDB has been providing training for teachers, including incorporating contents about Constitution, Basic Law and national security education in the core training programmes for newly-joined teachers, in-service teachers and teachers aspiring for promotion starting from the 2020/21 school year, organising the Constitution and Basic Law Knowledge Enrichment/Advanced Online Courses for Teachers, etc. In addition, the EDB has been organising

life-wide learning activities for students, including the Constitution and Basic Law Territory-wide Inter-school Competition, the National Day and Constitution Day Online Quiz Competitions, the “Let’s Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security” Programme co-organised with the Security Bureau for 3 consecutive years since the 2021/22 school year, the Constitution and Basic Law Student Ambassadors Training Scheme, etc., with a view to supporting schools in planning and implementing. Constitution and Basic Law education within and beyond the classroom in a holistic and systematic manner. These endeavours enable teachers and students to understand that the fundamental premise of “One Country, Two Systems” is to safeguard the sovereignty, security and development interests of the nation, and that “One Country, Two Systems” is the basis for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong, thereby fostering their awareness of and sense of responsibility for safeguarding national security together;

- Civil servants: The CSB requires that all applicants to civil service jobs must attain a pass result in the Basic Law and National Security Law Test in order to be considered for appointment, so as to ensure new recruits to the civil service have basic understanding of the Basic Law and the National Security Law. Besides, the Civil Service College (CSC) continues to strengthen training on the constitutional order and national security for officers of different levels. Currently, all new recruits are required to complete within the probationary period a foundation training, and officers of degree or professional grades are required to take part in advanced training upon confirmation to the permanent establishment. The content covers important topics such as the Constitution, the Basic Law, the National Security Law, the “One Country, Two Systems” principle, and the relationship between the Central Authorities and the HKSAR. The CSC also organises more comprehensive training for middle and senior-ranking officers, such as the in-depth programme on “One Country, Two Systems”, the contemporary China and the “Holistic View of National Security” seminar series, as well as national studies programmes on the Mainland. The CSC also adopts a blended training approach by actively integrating face-to-face and online training modes and strengthens the provision of e-learning resources to support civil servants’ continuous learning of related topics;
- Local community: The HYAB and the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) co-organise, on an annual basis, promotional activities relating to the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as Basic Law Quiz Competition and Basic Law Seminar. The CPCE also sponsors eligible organisations through its “Community Participation Scheme” to organise activities for promoting the Constitution, the Basic Law and “One Country, Two Systems” outside schools and in the community. Moreover, the 18 District Offices organise promotional activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law from time to time, such as training on “Radio Programme Production on the Basic Law for Secondary School Students”, student ambassador programme, relevant activities organised by youth volunteers, and roving exhibitions, quiz competitions, calligraphy competitions, game booths, variety shows, etc.;

- Members of the industrial, commercial and professional sectors: Having regard to the concerns and needs of the industrial, commercial and professional sectors, the TID and the Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors has been producing easy-to-understand promotional materials and disseminating them through different channels (such as publishing articles, participating in exhibitions, and broadcasting promotional videos in appropriate public places and on social media platforms) to promote the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law to the sectors; and
- Community outside Hong Kong: The HKSAR Government organises different promotional activities every year, including an online short video competition on the Basic Law to attract participants worldwide. The ISD is producing animation videos in series, which will be promoted via the Internet and social media platforms with a view to developing, among the public (in particular young people overseas), a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the relationship between the Constitution and the Basic Law, as well as the constitutional framework of the HKSAR.

5. The CBLPSC and its working groups will review the format, content and effectiveness of various promotional activities from time to time, and advise how to optimise the promotion strategy in light of the development and trend of promotional media and information technology. Also, on the basis of the number and feedback of participants etc., the CBLPSC and its working groups continuously evaluate the popularity of activities and the extent of understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law among target groups, and adjust the promotion strategy as appropriate having regard to the actual circumstances in order to achieve the best results.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB034**

**(Question Serial No. 2696)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): ()  
Programme: Not specified  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

In 2023, did the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau engage external lawyers for consultancy services under the Stores and Procurement Regulations of the Government without working through the Department of Justice? If so, what were the nature of such services and the expenditures incurred?

Asked by: Hon LAM San-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

In 2023, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau did not engage external lawyers for consultancy services under the Stores and Procurement Regulations of the Government.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB035**

**(Question Serial No. 1928)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Following the official promulgation for implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law, stability and order have been restored in Hong Kong. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide, in tabular form, details on the work undertaken by the Government to publicise, explain and promote the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Basic Law in the past year, including the use of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, as well as the staff establishment and expenditure involved.
2. What are the staff establishment and expenditure for the work to publicise, explain and promote the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Basic Law in the coming year?
3. What specific plans are in place to publicise and continuously promote the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Basic Law, so that young people will attach greater importance to and acquire a deeper understanding of safeguarding national security?

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

Having consulted the relevant bureaux and departments, the consolidated reply to the question is as follows:

Overall Strategy for Promotion of Constitution, Basic Law and National Security Law

2. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC) provides advice and steer on the overall strategy and key work plans for promoting the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law, and monitors, evaluates and reviews promotional programmes undertaken by government departments and non-governmental organisations. The

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) provides secretariat support to the CBLPSC. The 5 working groups under the CBLPSC (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong Kong) are respectively assisted by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, Education Bureau (EDB), Civil Service Bureau, Trade and Industry Department and Information Services Department in planning and organising various types of activities to promote the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law on various fronts to the general public and related sectors.

### Promotion of Constitution and Basic Law

3. The CMAB has been carrying out promotion and publicity work through different means and in a diversified manner to enable the public to have a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the constitutional order and basis of Hong Kong. Specific promotion work of the CMAB includes:

- (a) organising the Constitution Day Seminar;
- (b) using electronic means, online platforms and social media to promote widely to different strata of society, e.g. posting advertisements on social media for promotion of the videos on the Constitution and the Basic Law, designing online games, and co-producing different types of television programmes with the Radio Television Hong Kong to introduce the Constitution and the Basic Law in an easy-to-understand manner, such as “Talk About Basic Law With Photo” and the series of “Root & Origin: The Constitution”;
- (c) displaying large publicity banners outdoors, and producing publicity leaflets and posters on “One Country, Two Systems” for distribution to schools, public housing estates, etc.;
- (d) enhancing awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law by the general public and students through promotional activities at the district level, (e.g. organising roving exhibitions and parent-child workshops at shopping centres in various districts, and arranging the mobile resource centre and the mobile game booth to pay visits to different districts and schools); and
- (e) providing sponsorship to non-governmental organisations or community organisations through the “Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme” for staging various promotional and research activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as promotion ambassador training schemes, speaking contests, quizzes and slogan design competitions, in order to get across the messages in the community.

4. In the 2023-24 financial year, the original estimated expenditure of the CMAB for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law is \$26 million. In line with the promotion strategy formulated by the CBLPSC, the CMAB has augmented promotion and publicity work through internal deployment of resources. As such, the estimated actual expenditure of the year has increased to \$34 million. As for the 2024-25 financial year, the estimated expenditure on relevant work is about \$26 million. The CMAB will, having regard to the actual circumstances, consider devoting additional resources through internal deployment to

conduct the relevant work. At present, the CMAB's promotion work on the Constitution and the Basic Law is undertaken by a team including a Principal Assistant Secretary and 5 supporting officers.

### Promotion of National Security Law

5. Since the promulgation for implementation of the National Security Law in the HKSAR on 30 June 2020, the HKSAR Government has introduced the National Security Law to different people through different channels and means (including publishing pamphlets and compendium of articles, issuing press releases, placing newspaper advertisements, and officials taking part in interviews on television, radio and other media, and organising/attending seminars (including webinars), etc.), as well as through the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, and has responded to concerns raised.

6. In addition, the HKSAR Government first launched the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition in July 2021 covering the importance of the National Security Law, the legal regime, enforcement mechanisms, major provisions and effectiveness, and introduction of the work of the disciplined forces in safeguarding national security, with mini games provided. As at 11 March 2024, the online virtual exhibition recorded over 560 000 visits. In July 2023, the Security Bureau (SB) launched the updated version of the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition with the Hong Kong Palace Museum as its virtual background, bringing a new touring experience to visitors. The SB has also prepared a series of souvenirs for distribution to bureaux/departments, schools and youth uniformed groups of disciplined services departments, with a view to promoting the online virtual exhibition mentioned above.

7. The SB and EDB jointly organised the "2023 Let's Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security" Programme to encourage participation of teachers and students from all schools in the school bulletin board design competition, writing competition, slogan-cum-poster design competition and online quiz competition. The award presentation ceremony for the programme was held in early July 2023 to commend the winning schools and students, and the winning entries of the school bulletin board design competition, writing competition and slogan-cum-poster design competition were uploaded to the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition.

8. The SB, Department of Justice, EDB and Hong Kong Shine Tak Foundation jointly organised the "Territory-wide Inter-school National Security Knowledge Challenge" in 2023/24, which aimed at enhancing students' understanding of the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law. It was conducted in the form of a quiz, and was divided into four sections, i.e. the primary school and secondary school sections, both of which included team and individual competitions. Over 102 000 students from 585 primary and secondary schools participated in the Challenge. The finals of the team and individual competitions as well as the award presentation ceremony were held on 26 February 2024.

9. Through their youth groups, the disciplined services departments under the SB have all along assisted youths to cultivate good character, positive thinking and law-abiding awareness, and facilitated their understanding of national development to enhance their sense of national identity. The disciplined services departments will continue their efforts in taking forward national security education for members of the youth groups, with a view to raising the awareness of national security among youngsters.



10. Furthermore, the HKSAR Government has produced Announcements in the Public Interest for broadcasting on television and radio, as well as at government buildings, online platforms and webinars, to highlight the effectiveness of the National Security Law in stopping chaos and restoring order in Hong Kong, and in ensuring the steadfast and successful implementation of the “One Country, Two Systems” principle as well as the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

11. In regard to primary and secondary schools, the EDB has been adopting a “multi-pronged and co-ordinated” approach, which includes enhancing curriculum guides, developing learning and teaching resources, offering teacher training, organising life-wide learning activities for students, etc., to support schools in holistically and systematically planning and implementing national security education within and beyond the classroom. These endeavours enabled teachers and students to better understand the “holistic approach to national security”, grasp the importance of national security, and develop an awareness of and a sense of responsibility for safeguarding national security.

12. In future, the HKSAR Government will continue to allocate resources for its promotion work on the National Security Law through different channels (including online channels), so as to raise the national security and law-abiding awareness of Hong Kong residents, especially our youths. Major measures in 2024 include: to promote national security education to about 20 000 members of youth uniformed groups of disciplined services departments; continue to enhance the content of the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition; continue to take forward the “Let’s Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security” Programme; and deepen the understanding of the international community of the National Security Law and its positive messages. In respect of foreign politicians’ and media’s smearing, false statements and reports, the Chief Executive, Secretaries of Departments and Directors of Bureaux will continue to make prompt refutations and clarifications. Furthermore, apart from enhancing the publicity of the National Security Law overseas, the overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices have been closely monitoring commentaries from foreign politicians and media, and will continue to refute smearing and false statements. Any external or internal destructive force and political conspiracy trying to interfere with the HKSAR’s determination to safeguard national security in accordance with the law will not succeed.

#### Overall Expenditure and Staff Establishment Involved in the Promotion Work

13. Apart from the circumstances mentioned in paragraph 4, the HKSAR Government’s promotion work on the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law involves various bureaux and departments. The related expenditure and staff establishment are absorbed by the overall provision of the respective bureaux and departments, and therefore no breakdown figures are available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB036**

**(Question Serial No. 1929)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): ()  
Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned under the Programme that the Government will strengthen co-operation with the relevant organisations and institutions, and promote opportunities brought about by the Greater Bay Area development through the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the staff establishment and day-to-day expenditure of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre?
2. Does the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre have any specific plans for the next 3 years to promote opportunities arising from Greater Bay Area development, and provide support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area? If yes, what are the details?
3. In addition to the Promotion Centre, does the Government have any policies, measures and activities to further encourage, promote and co-ordinate Hong Kong young people's integration into the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area? If yes, what are the details and estimated expenditure? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

At present, 5 staff members have been deployed for the work of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre). For 2023-24, the revised estimated expenditure of the Promotion Centre is \$6.68 million.

2. The Promotion Centre, which officially came into operation in April 2023, is mainly responsible for further enhancing publicity and promotion in the Mainland cities of the

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area), as well as providing support for Hong Kong residents and enterprises there. Looking ahead, the Promotion Centre will continue to strengthen the liaison with Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, as well as the Mainland government agencies and related bodies, and to provide practical information and appropriate support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises. Examples include organising thematic seminars and briefings by representatives of relevant government departments and agencies on the latest support policies and preferential measures on entrepreneurship and employment for Hong Kong residents and enterprises in different cities of the Greater Bay Area, as well as on the problems encountered by Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland; organising exchange and business networking activities according to the needs of different industries; arranging more study missions to visit the Greater Bay Area cities for participants to learn more about the latest development and opportunities in these cities; and strengthening the co-operation with innovation and entrepreneurial bases in order to better support Hong Kong start-up teams etc.

3. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has all along emphasised that integration into the national development is the key to providing the new direction, new scope and new impetus for Hong Kong's future development, and young people are our future. Therefore, the HKSAR Government all along encourages Hong Kong young people to aim high and seize the significant opportunities under Greater Bay Area development. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) has strived to make use of diversified and multi-media means and channels, including traditional media, the Internet and social media platforms such as its thematic website and WeChat official account, as well as physical activities and exhibitions etc., to promote the unlimited opportunities of Greater Bay Area development to various sectors of the community (including Hong Kong young people). In collaboration with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), the Office has launched and continuously optimised the "GoGBA" digital platform, which provides support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises interested in tapping into the Mainland market of the Greater Bay Area. At the same time, the Office has co-organised with HKTDC a number of "GoGBA Development Day" events in Hong Kong and the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area every year which help Hong Kong young people understand the various business opportunities of the Greater Bay Area through briefings by representatives of governments and institutions as well as experience sharing by young entrepreneurs, etc. The Office also actively participates in "Education and Careers Expo", "Entrepreneur Day" and roving exhibitions staged at local universities etc. so as to provide young people and members of the public with information about entrepreneurship and employment in the Greater Bay Area.

4. In 2024-25, the estimated expenditure of the Office for taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area is about \$64.4 million, of which about \$20.7 million is for publicity and promotion work. The Office does not have breakdown of expenditure involved in the publicity and promotion work conducted for individual sectors.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****CMAB037****(Question Serial No. 1930)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned under the Programme that the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau will work closely with the Electoral Affairs Commission to ensure that elections are open, fair and honest while at the same time safe and orderly, more efficient and user-friendly as well as to continue to enhance electoral arrangements. For the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, 4 Near Boundary Polling Stations were set up to enable electors who were in the Mainland or needed to travel to and from the Mainland on the polling day to return to Hong Kong to cast their votes. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the manpower and expenditure for the Near Boundary Polling Stations?
2. What is the respective voter turnout of the 4 Near Boundary Polling Stations?
3. Are there plans to regularise the setting up of Near Boundary Polling Stations in future elections? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The manpower and expenditure for the Near Boundary Polling Stations (NBPSs) are subsumed under the overall expenditure of the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election; the Registration and Electoral Office has not compiled a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved (including manpower).

2. The voter turnout of each NBPS is as follows:

<b>NBPS</b>	<b>Voter turnout</b>
<b>Hong Kong Taoist Association Tang Hin Memorial Secondary School</b>	
Hong Kong Island constituencies (Polling Station Code: NB01)	952

Kowloon constituencies (Polling Station Code: NB02)	2 640
<b>Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Kap Yan Directors' College</b>	
New Territories East and New Territories North constituencies (Polling Station Code: NB03)	3 284
New Territories West and Islands constituencies (Polling Station Code: NB04)	3 115
<b>Total</b>	9 991

3. Given that a large number of eligible registered electors are currently working and living in the Mainland, the Government will continue, having regard to the actual circumstances, actively studying and considering the implementation of various appropriate arrangements to facilitate these electors to exercise their right to vote, such as setting up NBPSs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB038**

**(Question Serial No. 2557)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

With the Personal Data (Privacy) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (Amendment Ordinance) coming into effect in 2021, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) has been given new criminal investigation and prosecution powers to handle doxxing cases on a “one-stop” basis from criminal investigation to collection of evidence and prosecution, and the Criminal Investigation Division has been set up. In this regard, would the Government advise this Committee of the following for the past 3 years:

1. The number of arrest operations for doxxing conducted by the PCPD under the Amendment Ordinance, and among which, the number of joint operations with the Police each year.
2. The number of PCPD's criminal investigations, arrests and prosecutions for doxxing under the Amendment Ordinance, and the number of convictions by court each year.
3. The number of arrestees each year, with a breakdown by main motive for doxxing.
4. The (i) number of online platforms served with PCPD's cessation notices, and the (ii) number of cessation notices and (iii) number of doxxing messages involved each year.
5. A list of online platforms served with PCPD's cessation notices and the respective compliance rate each year.
6. The number of channels for doxxing removed successfully by way of PCPD's cessation notices, and the online platforms of such channels each year.
7. The establishment, strength and expenditure on emoluments of different ranks of staff, and the total expenditure of the Criminal Investigation Division each year.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

Since the Personal Data (Privacy) (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 (Amendment Ordinance) came into effect in October 2021, relevant information on the work of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) to combat doxxing acts in the past 3 years is as below:

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b> (as at end-February 2024)
Number of arrest operations by the PCPD	1 (0)	19 (3)	24 (0)
Criminal investigation cases	65	83	136
Number of arrested persons	1	19	25
Number of prosecuted persons	0	7	20
Number of convictions by court	0	3	14
Doxxing motives	Monetary dispute	Monetary, workplace and relationship disputes etc.	Monetary, workplace and relationship disputes etc.

The numbers in () refer to the joint operations by the PCPD and the Police

2. Relevant information on cessation notices issued by the PCPD in the past 3 years is as below:

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b> (as at end-February 2024)
Number of platforms involved	13	28	18
Number of cessation notices	602	1 006	296
Number of doxxing messages involved	3 110	17 829	8 511
Number of removed doxxing channels	0	142	61

3. The cessation notices were mainly issued by the PCPD to major social platforms, and as at February 2024, the overall compliance rate of issued cessation notices was 96.2%.

4. The PCPD's staff establishment responsible for handling doxxing-related acts includes Personal Data Officers and Legal Counsels, and the relevant manpower allocation, expenditure on emoluments and total expenditure are as below:

	<b>2021-22#</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b> (as at end-February 2024)
<b>Manpower allocation</b>	10	13	13
<b>Expenditure on emoluments</b>	\$4.98 million	\$10.06 million	\$10.65 million
<b>Total expenditure</b>	\$5.6 million	\$11.8 million	\$12.5 million

# *the Criminal Investigation Division responsible for handling doxxing cases was established in July 2021*

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB039**

**(Question Serial No. 1150)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

In his first Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Government would further strengthen publicity and education on the Constitution and the Basic Law. Would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details and estimated expenditure on the above-mentioned work of the Government in 2024-25?
2. Has the Government assessed through surveys or other means the extent of knowledge of the Constitution and the Basic Law among Hong Kong people, particularly students?
3. Are there plans to enhance Hong Kong people's knowledge of the functions, powers and operation of the National People's Congress, which enacts, amends and oversees the enforcement of the Constitution and the Basic Law? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
4. With the strengthening of exchange and co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland, are there plans to enhance Hong Kong people's knowledge of the legal system as well as everyday laws and regulations of the Mainland? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

The HKSAR Government has attached great importance to the promotion work on the Constitution and the Basic Law. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC) and its 5 working groups (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong

Kong) plan and organise various types of activities to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law on various fronts to the general public and related sectors. The CBLPSC also reviews the format, content and effectiveness of promotional activities from time to time, and advise how to further optimise the promotion strategy in light of the development and trend of promotional media and information technology. Various departments will also adjust their work plans as appropriate having regard to the actual circumstances in order to achieve the best results.

2. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has been carrying out promotion and publicity work through different means and in a diversified manner to enable the public to have a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the constitutional order and basis of Hong Kong. Such publicity has covered the functions, powers and roles of the National People's Congress in regard to the Constitution and the Basic Law etc. Specific promotion work of the CMAB includes:

- (a) organising thematic seminars;
- (b) using electronic means, online platforms and social media to promote widely to different strata of society, e.g. posting advertisements on social media for promotion of the videos on the Constitution and the Basic Law, designing online games, and co-producing different types of television programmes with the Radio Television Hong Kong to introduce the Constitution and the Basic Law in an easy-to-understand manner, such as "Talk About Basic Law With Photo" and the series of "Root & Origin: The Constitution";
- (c) displaying large publicity banners outdoors, and producing publicity leaflets and posters on "One Country, Two Systems" for distribution to schools, public housing estates, etc.;
- (d) enhancing awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law by the general public and students through promotional activities at the district level, (e.g. organising roving exhibitions and parent-child workshops at shopping centres in various districts, and arranging the mobile resource centre and the mobile game booth to pay visits to different districts and schools; and
- (e) providing sponsorship to non-governmental organisations or community organisations through the "Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme" for staging various promotional and research activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as promotion ambassador training schemes, speaking contests, quizzes and slogan design competitions, in order to get across the messages in the community.

3. In the 2024-25 financial year, the estimated expenditure on CMAB's promotion work mentioned above is \$26 million.

4. The Education Bureau (EDB) has fully supported schools in holistically and systematically planning and implementing education on the Constitution and the Basic Law within and beyond the classroom. The EDB has adopted a "multi-pronged and co-ordinated" approach, including enhancing curriculum guides, developing learning and teaching resources, offering teacher training, organising life-wide learning activities for students, etc., with a view to enabling teachers and students to understand that the

fundamental principle of “One Country, Two Systems” is to safeguard the country’s sovereignty, security and development interests, and that “One Country, Two Systems” is the basis for the long-term stability of Hong Kong. The EDB has been using various means, such as inspections, school visits and daily communication, to understand how national education is delivered in schools. From the 2023/24 school year onwards, the EDB conducts regular focus inspections in at least 50 schools every year on the implementation of national education (including education on the Constitution and the Basic Law) to ensure teaching effectiveness.

5. The HKSAR Government has been making efforts to enhance public knowledge of rule of law education, including the Mainland legal system. For example, the Department of Justice (DoJ) established the Steering Committee on Rule of Law Education (Steering Committee) in February 2023, which advises and assists the DoJ on the strategy and programme for the promotion of the rule of law education in Hong Kong. With the assistance of the Steering Committee, the DoJ launched a new “ROLE Stars Train-the-Leaders Programme” (TTL Programme) in November 2023. Through a diversified, “down-to-earth”, easy-to-understand and interactive approach, the TTL Programme explains to trainees the relationship, under the principle of “One Country, Two Systems”, between Hong Kong’s rule of law and the Constitution, the Basic Law, the National Security Law and other national laws, the fundamental elements of the Mainland legal system, and the key features of the common law system in Hong Kong, etc. Such training will continue to be provided in 2024. In addition, the DoJ has been operating the Summer Attachment Programme for Hong Kong Law Students in the Mainland since 2015 to promote understanding of the Mainland legal system among Hong Kong law students. Under the programme, DoJ’s summer interns will be attached to relevant legal, executive or judicial organs or other organisations in the Mainland, so that they could enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Mainland legal system, and broaden their horizons through first-hand experience.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB040**

**(Question Serial No. 0243)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

On the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau's work to promote national security among the public, what are the staff establishment, expenditure on emoluments and total expenditure in each of the past 3 years and for the coming year? How many promotional activities on national security were sponsored in each of the 3 years, and what were the sponsored organisations, names of activities and amounts of sponsorship involved? How much has been reserved for providing sponsorship in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The HKSAR Government's promotion work on national security involves the participation of various bureaux and departments. For example, the Security Bureau has launched the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition, provided mini games, and prepared a series of souvenirs to promote the virtual exhibition; organised the "2024 Let's Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security" Programme, which featured a writing competition for students, a school bulletin board design competition and outstanding lesson plan design selection; promoted national security education through youth groups of disciplined services departments; organised the "Territory-wide Inter-school National Security Knowledge Challenge"; and broadcast videos to highlight the effectiveness of the National Security Law, etc.

2. The Education Bureau has taken a wide array of measures, which include enhancing curriculum guides, developing learning and teaching resources, offering teacher training and organising life-wide learning activities for students, to support schools in holistically and systematically planning and implementing national security education within and beyond the classroom.

3. In addition, the Department of Justice (DoJ) has conducted a series of promotion work, including organising the National Security Law Legal Forum and publishing forum proceedings that included speakers' speeches and discussions, with a view to heightening

public awareness of national security; publishing the Articles and Reference Materials on the National Security Law, as well as a compendium of annotations of the National Security Law and sedition offences in the Crimes Ordinance<sup>1</sup>, with a view to facilitating an accurate understanding of the National Security Law and related legislation by different sectors of the community; supporting the Radio Television Hong Kong in producing the “National Security Law Chronicles” programme; and hosting a special session “National Security Chatroom: You ask, I answer” at Hong Kong Legal Week 2023, an annual flagship event, in November 2023, during which the Secretary for Justice personally answered questions about the National Security Law, so as to further promote an accurate understanding of the National Security Law among the public. Besides, the DoJ launched the first phase of “ROLE Stars Train-the-Leaders Programme”, themed “Rule of Law Education Stars”, in November 2023. The training content covered the relationship, under the principle of “One Country, Two Systems”, between Hong Kong’s rule of law and the Constitution, the Basic Law, the National Security Law and other national laws, and the key features of the common law system in Hong Kong etc., with the aim of enhancing the promotion of rule of law education on all fronts in the community.

4. The promotion work for national security of various bureaux and departments is covered by their respective overall provision, and therefore no breakdown figures in respect of the expenditure and manpower involved are available.

5. The HKSAR Government has implemented various schemes to support non-profit-making organisations in conducting promotional activities on the Constitution, the Basic Law and national security, such as the “Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme” and the “Community Participation Scheme”. The HKSAR Government does not have breakdown figures on the amount of sponsorship for promotional activities on national security.

---

<sup>1</sup> The compendium of annotations collates and summarises court cases concerning the National Security Law and the sedition offences in the Crimes Ordinance (which have been incorporated into Division 4, Part 3 of the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB041**

**(Question Serial No. 0244)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the expenditures incurred on the promotion of the Basic Law in the past 3 years?
2. How are promotional programmes on the Basic Law evaluated in terms of effectiveness?
3. What are the evaluation results in each of the past 3 years?
4. Has the Government assessed the effectiveness of the current evaluation method? If yes, what are the results of assessment? If no, what are the reasons?
5. How does the Government strengthen promotion of the relationship between the Constitution of our country and the Basic Law?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Constitution and the Basic Law together form the constitutional basis of the HKSAR, providing the strongest safeguard for the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government has all along attached great importance to publicity and education on the Constitution and the Basic Law, with a view to enabling the public to have a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. On promotional strategy, the HKSAR Government has adopted a diversified approach in publicity and public education, including making an extensive use of online platforms and social media to disseminate publicity information, rolling out large-scale publicity and promotional events at the community level, producing television and radio programmes that are comprehensive and easy-to-understand, and enhancing publicity work targeting for specific groups such as students, teachers, youths and civil servants.

2. In the past 3 financial years (i.e. 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24), the actual expenditure of the CMAB for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law is about \$17 million, \$32 million and \$34 million (estimated actual expenditure) respectively.

3. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC) and its 5 working groups (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong Kong) have been planning and organising various types of activities to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law on various fronts to the general public and relevant sectors. The CBLPSC and its working groups will review the format, content and effectiveness of promotional activities from time to time through evaluating their popularity and efficacy based on the number and feedback of participants, and advise how to optimise the promotion strategy in light of the development and trend of promotional media and information technology. We will continue to closely keep in view the effectiveness of the promotional activities, and adjust the promotion strategy as appropriate having regard to the actual circumstances in order to achieve the best results.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB042**

**(Question Serial No. 0245)**

Head: (144) GS: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

1. On advising bureaux and departments on matters relating to the implementation of the Basic Law, what are the specific tasks, manpower and expenditure involved?
2. On promoting public awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law, what are the specific tasks, manpower and expenditure involved?
3. What are the estimated expenditures on these 2 areas of work for the coming year?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has been carrying out promotion and publicity work through different means and in a diversified manner to enable the public to have a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. Specific promotion strategies include:

- (a) organising thematic seminars;
- (b) using electronic means, online platforms and social media to promote widely to different strata of society, e.g. posting advertisements on social media for promotion of the videos on the Constitution and the Basic Law, designing online games, and co-producing different types of television programmes with the Radio Television Hong Kong to introduce the Constitution and the Basic Law in an easy-to-understand manner, such as “Talk About Basic Law With Photo” and the series of “Root & Origin: The Constitution”;
- (c) displaying large publicity banners outdoors, and producing publicity leaflets and posters on “One Country, Two Systems” for distribution to schools, public housing estates, etc.;



- (d) enhancing awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law by the general public and students through promotional activities at the district level (e.g. organising roving exhibitions and parent-child workshops at shopping centres in various districts, and arranging the mobile resource centre and the mobile game booth to pay visits to different districts and schools); and
- (e) providing sponsorship to non-governmental organisations or community organisations through the “Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme” for staging various promotional and research activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as promotion ambassador training schemes, speaking contests, quizzes and slogan design competitions, in order to get across the messages in the community.

The above work is undertaken by a team including a Principal Assistant Secretary and 5 supporting officers in the CMAB.

2. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC) provides advice and steer on the overall strategy and key work plans for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law, and monitors, evaluates and reviews promotional programmes undertaken by government departments and non-governmental organisations. The CMAB provides secretariat support to the CBLPSC. The 5 working groups under the CBLPSC (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong Kong) are respectively assisted by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, Education Bureau, Civil Service Bureau, Trade and Industry Department and Information Services Department in planning and organising various types of activities to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law on various fronts to the general public and related sectors.

3. In the 2023-24 financial year, the original estimated expenditure of the CMAB for the promotion of the Constitution and the Basic Law is \$26 million. In line with the promotion strategy formulated by the CBLPSC, the CMAB has augmented promotion and publicity work through internal deployment of resources. As such, the estimated actual expenditure of the year has increased to \$34 million. As for the 2024-25 financial year, the estimated expenditure on relevant work is about \$26 million. The CMAB will suitably deploy resources based on the actual circumstances to conduct relevant work.

4. The CMAB has been providing advice and support to other bureaux and departments in the implementation of the Basic Law and such work is an integral part of the duties and functions of the CMAB. As such, no breakdown figures in respect of the expenditure and manpower involved are available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB043**

**(Question Serial No. 0813)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Subvention: Equal Opportunities Commission and Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 include strengthening personal data protection and addressing the challenges posed by cyber technologies. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of publicity and training work, guidance on relevant legislation and funding schemes targeting enterprises in 2023-24 and 2024-25? What are the manpower and expenditure involved?
2. Are there work plans to help the public, particularly the youth and silver-haired, to protect personal privacy and stay vigilant against phone scams this year? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

On the promotion of training and guidance on relevant legislation targeting enterprises, the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) has been actively promoting the importance of protecting and respecting personal data privacy to enterprises through different means including seminars, professional workshops, talks, guidance and leaflets, the PCPD's website and social media platforms, so as to enhance enterprises' understanding of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and to address the challenges posed by cyber technologies.

2. In 2023-24 (as at end-February 2024), the PCPD held a total of more than 400 professional workshops, online or face-to-face seminars and meetings with stakeholders, attracting over 36 200 participants. During the year, the PCPD also conducted training sessions for more than 110 organisations and issued a number of publications on various key topics, providing stakeholders with practical guidance and compliance recommendations. The publications included "Guidance on Data Breach Handling and Data

Breach Notifications”, “Human Resource Management: Common Questions”, “Guidance on Cross-boundary Data Transfer: Standard Contract for Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)”, and the report and leaflet on “Privacy Protection in the Digital Age: A Comparison of the Privacy Settings of 10 Online Shopping Platforms”, etc.

3. On the other hand, the PCPD also organised its flagship event “Privacy-Friendly Awards 2023”, presenting awards to 138 enterprises, public and private organisations as well as government departments to recognise their determination and performance in protecting personal data privacy. Under the theme of “Embrace Privacy Management Programme to Gain Trust and Benefits”, the “Privacy-Friendly Awards 2023” highlighted the importance of establishing a Personal Data Privacy Management Programme to enterprises.

4. To support enterprises in tackling cyber challenges, the PCPD also launched a thematic webpage on data security and a data security hotline to help enterprises enhance their measures on safeguarding data security. Besides, the PCPD and the Hong Kong Productivity Council jointly released the results of the “Hong Kong Enterprise Cyber Security Readiness Index and Privacy Awareness” survey report in November 2023. The PCPD also organised and participated in different seminars and conferences to explain in detail cyber security and data security measures.

5. In 2024-25, the PCPD will continue to organise different professional workshops and in-house seminars for enterprises, and actively collaborate with different organisations and professional bodies to organise topical seminars on the prevention of personal data breach incidents and fraud. The PCPD will also organise the “Privacy Awareness Week” under the theme of data security. In view of the development of and public interest on artificial intelligence (AI), the PCPD will undertake more comprehensive and in-depth studies, and exchange views with stakeholders on impacts of personal data privacy brought by AI upon various sectors, enterprises and users. The PCPD plans to publish an AI governance framework in 2024, with a view to providing practical advice to organisations from the perspective of protecting personal data privacy. In tandem, the PCPD will issue guidance on other topics during the year, such as smart use of smartphones and social media, cloud computing, and the use of devices and portable storage devices, with a view to promoting the importance of protecting personal data privacy to various sectors.

6. Regarding the manpower expenditure on the promotion of training and guidance on relevant legislation for enterprises, given that it is part of the PCPD’s overall manpower expenditure, a separate breakdown is not available. Besides, there are no funding schemes targeting enterprises in 2023-24 and 2024-25.

7. On publicity and education for young people, the PCPD promotes to young people the importance of respecting and protecting personal data privacy through seminars and educational activities. In 2024-25, the PCPD will organise a new round of the “Student Ambassador for Privacy Protection Programme - Partnering Schools Recognition Scheme” to encourage all secondary schools to join the network of “partnering schools”, so as to foster the culture of respecting and protecting personal data privacy on campus. In addition, to raise students’ awareness of personal data protection when using social media and cultivate the right attitude of saying “no” to cyberbullying and doxxing, the PCPD will continue to organise the School Touring of Anti-doxxing Education Talks to disseminate relevant information to secondary school students.

8. As regards publicity and education for the elderly, the PCPD will proactively reach out to the community, such as conducting anti-fraud talks in elderly centres to elaborate on the latest fraudulent tricks of scammers and remind the elderly on how to better protect personal data privacy. The PCPD will also press ahead with the efforts to promote the protection of personal data in major public transportation networks and online platforms. Further, the PCPD has launched a series of anti-fraud publicity activities under the theme of “Don’t Hand Over Your Personal Data - Beware of Fraudsters”, with down-to-earth videos to convey the message of fraud prevention in a light-hearted way. Through broadcasting on local television channels, online platforms and MTR in-train televisions, these videos seek to enhance the understanding and awareness of protecting personal data privacy among the elderly and the public.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB044**

**(Question Serial No. 0814)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 include actively dovetailing with the national strategies including the National 14th Five-Year Plan and the Greater Bay Area development, and strengthening regional co-operation with the Mainland. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. As mentioned in the Three-Year Action Plan for the Development of International Business Environment in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area promulgated by the National Development and Reform Commission, measures will first be implemented in certain key areas to facilitate Hong Kong and Macao professionals' practice in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area. Has a study been conducted on the difficulties encountered by Hong Kong professionals practising in the Mainland? Will the Government draw up plans to facilitate professionals' smooth practice in the Mainland? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. Will the Government encourage mutual recognition of qualifications for more professions between Hong Kong and the Mainland? If so, what are the specific areas involved and the details of work plans?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

In end-2023, the Central Government promulgated a number of important planning documents, including the Three-Year Action Plan for the Development of International Business Environment in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Action Plan). After the promulgation of the document, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has promptly communicated and liaised with the Guangdong Provincial Government to jointly enhance collaboration, further promote the business environment of the Greater Bay Area and expedite the high-quality development of the Greater Bay Area, in accordance with the requirements of the Action Plan.

2. The Action Plan aims to enhance international competitiveness of the Greater Bay Area, developing it into a first-class business environment that is market-oriented and internationalised and underpinned by the rule of law, fully unleashing market vibrancy and creativity. As stated in the Action Plan, relevant initiatives include facilitating cross-boundary practice and promoting harmonisation of rules in various sectors, exploring measures that can be first implemented in certain key areas to facilitate professionals in Hong Kong and Macao to practise in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, thereby creating more favourable conditions for Hong Kong's high-end service industries to expand their businesses into the Mainland market.

3. For legal services, the State Council has conducted a pilot scheme since 2020 which lowered the threshold for Hong Kong and Macao legal practitioners to practise in the Mainland. As at late December 2023, over 380 Hong Kong and Macao legal practitioners passed the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Legal Professional Examination (Greater Bay Area Examination) and obtained the Lawyer's License (Greater Bay Area) to provide legal services in the nine Mainland municipalities in the Greater Bay Area on certain civil and commercial matters to which the Mainland laws apply. Pursuant to the State Council's revised measures in September 2023, the pilot scheme has been extended for 3 years until October 2026 and the practice experience threshold for enrolment in the Greater Bay Area Examination has also been lowered from 5 years to 3 years, allowing more young Hong Kong barristers and solicitors to enroll in the examination. The Department of Justice (DoJ) plans to organise, in co-operation with the Supreme People's Court, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the High People's Court of Guangdong Province, the Greater Bay Area Lawyers' Practical Legal Training Course, in order to enhance the practical knowledge of Hong Kong legal practitioners practising in the Greater Bay Area in the Mainland courts' handling of different areas of civil and commercial matters. The DoJ will also continue to keep in close contact with the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Law Society of Hong Kong to better understand difficulties facing the Hong Kong legal sector in relation to the implementation of the pilot scheme for the Greater Bay Area lawyers' practice, and convey their concerns to authorities such as the MoJ as appropriate.

4. For architectural and engineering related professional services, the HKSAR Government has been working closely with relevant Mainland authorities to actively take forward a number of preferential measures for Hong Kong, including the promulgation of a registration system in the nine Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area in 2021. This allows eligible Hong Kong enterprises and professionals in 5 disciplines, namely engineering, architecture, surveying, planning and landscape architecture, to acquire equivalent qualifications in the Mainland through a simple registration process, thereby facilitating them to provide direct services in the nine Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area. In early 2023, Qianhai launched 2 projects for the construction of primary and secondary schools. Two Hong Kong architectural firms were appointed via open tender to provide one-stop-through services to implement the projects using Hong Kong's project management practices. Looking ahead, the HKSAR Government will continue to maintain a close dialogue with relevant Mainland authorities and solicit more architectural and engineering pilot projects in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, thereby enabling more Hong Kong enterprises and professionals to participate in the country's development. With the injection of Hong Kong's design and project management elements into the projects, it would in return assist in forging the Greater Bay Area into a world-class international bay area. The Development Bureau will also continue to maintain close liaison with the construction sector so as to understand the problems that they have encountered in providing professional services in the

Mainland, and duly reflect the situation to the Mainland authorities in a timely manner with a view to enhancing the relevant preferential policies for Hong Kong.

5. Furthermore, the HKSAR Government has been promoting trade and investment liberalisation and facilitation between the two places through the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), under the framework of which, the Mainland implements various preferential and facilitation measures for Hong Kong service suppliers in most areas of services trade, such as relaxing qualification requirements for the provision of services by Hong Kong professionals, allowing relevant professionals to sit for examinations, register, practise and set up enterprises in the Mainland as well as encouraging mutual recognition of professional qualifications by the professional bodies of both sides. These arrangements are meant to facilitate Hong Kong professionals to enter the Mainland market and participate in the national development.

6. At present, various government bureaux and departments facilitate the discussion of agreements or arrangements for mutual recognition of professional qualifications as well as their specific content (e.g. accreditation, exemption of examination subjects, etc.) between professional bodies and regulatory authorities of the two places in accordance with the needs and relevant regulatory requirements of the professional sectors. Once signed, the relevant agreements or arrangements can be incorporated under the framework of the CEPA as preferential liberalisation measures for trade in services between the two places. To date, the sectors where the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, or exemption arrangements for papers of professional qualification examinations have been put in place including securities and futures, accounting, real estate, and construction and related engineering. The HKSAR Government will continue to actively seek to enrich the contents of the CEPA by striving for further liberalisation, aiming especially at those professional services sectors that Hong Kong enjoys competitive advantages, for the Greater Bay Area as well as the entire Mainland.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB045**

**(Question Serial No. 0793)**

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

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

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

1. Provision for 2024-25 is \$15.6 million (4.6%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24, and as explained on page 341, this is due to the increased provision for operating expenses. Please set out the specific items involved in the increased provision.
2. The indicators for the work of Mainland Offices include enhancing trade opportunities and investment promotion. Respecting the work in this area, please advise of the division of work and allocation of resources among the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, InvestHK under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises under Financial Secretary's Office, and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.
3. The HKSAR Government previously indicated that the Mainland Offices will also take up the work on "cultural and arts exchanges", but this is not mentioned under the aim and brief description of the Programme. Please advise how the exchange work will be taken forward and set out the plans for 2024-25.

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The number of staff of the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government in 2024-25 is broadly the same as that in 2023-24. In 2023-24, there were civil service posts of the Mainland Offices left vacant for a period of time and replacement civil servants could not be arranged in time, as such, the vacancies concerned were filled by non-civil service staff on a short-term basis to meet operational needs. Hence, the expenditure on emoluments, staff-related costs as well as the overall actual expenditure in 2023-24 were lower than the original estimate. In 2024-25, we will, in light of the operational needs and actual circumstances of the Mainland Offices, deploy civil servants to fill relevant posts. As such, the estimated expenditure for civil service pay and allowances will be increased.

2. On enhancing trade opportunities and investment promotion, the Mainland Offices have been proactively serving as important bridges between Hong Kong and the Mainland,



including enhancing communication and liaison with counterparts in the Mainland; representing and promoting Hong Kong's trade and commercial interests; encouraging and attracting investments to Hong Kong; and supporting Hong Kong people and businessmen in the Mainland etc. Dedicated Teams for Attracting Businesses and Talents in the Mainland Offices provide support to the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES) under the Financial Secretary and InvestHK under the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau by proactively reaching out to target enterprises in the Mainland; assisting target enterprises in implementing their plan to set up or expand business in Hong Kong through corporate visits, business discussions and promotional activities; and referring them to OASES or InvestHK in a timely manner for further follow-up. Besides, the Mainland Offices and InvestHK organise different forms of online and offline investment promotion activities, including meetings with clients, investment promotion visits, fora, seminars, round-table meetings, etc. to promote Hong Kong's business advantages and Hong Kong as an ideal platform for Mainland enterprises to "go global", and actively assist Mainland potential investors in setting up or expanding business in Hong Kong.

3. Through diversified services and activities, such as seminars, workshops, study missions, business matching and large-scale promotional events (e.g. SmartHK), the 13 offices of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) in the Mainland facilitate Hong Kong businessmen in tapping into the Mainland market, and provide on-the-ground support for Hong Kong small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the Mainland, while at the same time encouraging Mainland enterprises to partner with the Hong Kong business sector and further leverage Hong Kong's role as an international business platform to "go global". The Mainland Offices will also work closely with the HKTDC, and upload HKTDC's thematic study reports on Mainland's investment environment to their websites for easy access by the business sector and the public.

4. The expenditure and manpower of relevant work is an integral part of the overall provision and staff establishment of the respective departments and offices, and therefore no breakdown figures are available.

5. On cultural and arts exchanges, the Mainland Offices have strived to foster cultural and arts exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and promote Hong Kong's role as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange under the support of the National 14th Five-Year Plan. In 2023-24, the Mainland Offices organised roving exhibitions, seminars and press coverage etc. from time to time, and sponsored the performances of Hong Kong arts groups and young artists in the Mainland. Examples include Jin Yong exhibition; "Hello, POP Hong Kong!" thematic exhibition; screenings of Hong Kong films; concerts staged by Hong Kong's famous musicians, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra; performances of Hong Kong Ballet; Chinese opera performances of Xiqu Centre, West Kowloon Cultural District, etc. These activities were well received by Mainland people, and helped to promote the positive image of Hong Kong. The Mainland Offices also assist in publicity and promotion through media and social platforms, and liaise with the local media to cover the events. In 2024-25, the Mainland Offices will continue to provide appropriate assistance to Hong Kong cultural and arts groups who intend to stage performances in the Mainland and will launch publicity for the events, with a view to supporting the performances of various cultural and arts groups, and pressing ahead with the efforts to promote Hong Kong's unique culture and arts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB046**

**(Question Serial No. 0295)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB)'s main responsibilities under this Programme are to, among others, "promote and co-ordinate co-operation and liaison with the Mainland, Macao Special Administrative Region and Taiwan, and advise bureaux and departments on related matters as necessary". Please advise this Committee of CMAB's work to promote and co-ordinate co-operation and liaison with Taiwan in 2023-24 and the expenditure involved. Please also set out the specific work plan, estimated expenditure and timetable for the coming year.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

In 2023-24, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has offered advice to policy bureaux and departments on the handling of matters related to Taiwan from time to time. Besides, while the Hong Kong Economic, Trade and Cultural Office in Taipei has suspended operation with effect from May 2021, Hong Kong and Taiwan would maintain communication on a case-by-case basis and liaison at working level when necessary, for example, to provide appropriate assistance for the Hong Kong people and their families when Hong Kong people are in distress in Taiwan. The CMAB will continue with the above-mentioned work in the coming year. As the relevant work is an integral part of the work of the CMAB, the provision required cannot be singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB047**

**(Question Serial No. 2362)**

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

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

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Hong Kong National Security Law was officially promulgated by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on 30 June 2020 to restore stability and order in Hong Kong. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau's responsibilities are to, among others, promote public understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law, and conduct elections in accordance with the Basic Law and the decisions of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. Would the Government provide information on the following:

1. What work was undertaken by the Government to publicise, explain or promote the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Improving Electoral System Ordinance in the past year? Please provide details in tabular form, including the statistics on the use of social media platforms such as facebook, Twitter and Instagram. What are the staff establishment and expenditure involved? What is the number of people reached out? Is the Government certain that such promotion work could effectively generate publicity among young people?
2. Will additional resources be allocated in future to publicise or continuously promote the Hong Kong National Security Law and the Improving Electoral System Ordinance on social media platforms, so as to enhance young people's understanding of the above initiatives? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
3. What are the establishment and ranks of staff dedicated to the promotion and education of the Constitution and the Basic Law, and what is the estimated expenditure involved?
4. What are the specific targets and details of the work? Apart from producing publications, displaying publicity banners and broadcasting Announcements in the Public Interest on television, what other measures are taken to equip the public with an accurate understanding of important constitutional documents and political systems (including the arrangements for improving the electoral system)?

5. Further to the question above, how many target groups are identified by the Government for its publicity work, e.g. members of the public, civil servants, university students, secondary school students, business associations, and expatriates working in Hong Kong? How does the Government assess if the target groups have acquired an accurate understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law?
6. On the promotion and education of the Constitution and the Basic Law, what is the division of work between the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau and other bureaux, such as Chief Secretary and Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Secretary and Under Secretary for Education, and Secretary and Under Secretary for Security? How effective collaboration across bureaux is achieved to reach the targets of the promotion work?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

Having consulted the relevant bureaux and departments, the consolidated reply to the question is as follows:

#### Overall Strategy for Promotion of Constitution, Basic Law and National Security Law

2. Under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee (CBLPSC) provides advice and steer on the overall strategy and key work plans for promoting the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law, and monitors, evaluates and reviews promotional programmes undertaken by government departments and non-governmental organisations. The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) provides secretariat support to the CBLPSC. The 5 working groups under the CBLPSC (namely Working Group on Local Community; Working Group on Teachers and Students; Working Group on Civil Servants; Working Group on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors; and Working Group on Community Outside Hong Kong) are respectively assisted by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau, Education Bureau (EDB), Civil Service Bureau, Trade and Industry Department and Information Services Department in planning and organising various types of activities to promote the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law on various fronts to the general public and related sectors.

3. The CBLPSC and its working groups will review the format, content and effectiveness of promotional activities from time to time through evaluating their popularity and efficacy based on the number and feedback of participants, and advise how to optimise the promotion strategy in light of the development and trend of promotional media and information technology. Relevant Directors of Bureaux have joined the CBLPSC as members to offer advice and necessary support for the purpose of effectively promoting the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law. We will continue to make good use of the platform of the CBLPSC and keep a close eye on the effectiveness of various promotional activities, and adjust the promotion strategy as appropriate having regard to the actual circumstances in order to achieve the best results.

#### Promotion of Constitution and Basic Law

4. Regarding the specific promotion work, the CMAB has been carrying out promotion and publicity work through different means and in a diversified manner to enable the public to have a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law. At present, the relevant promotion work is undertaken by a team including a Principal Assistant Secretary and 5 supporting officers in the CMAB. The expenditure involved is subsumed under the overall provision for the CMAB, and hence no breakdown figures are available. Regarding the expenditure for promotion, the estimated actual expenditure of the CMAB for promoting the Constitution and the Basic Law in the 2023-24 financial year is \$34 million, whereas the estimated expenditure for the 2024-25 financial year is about \$26 million. The CMAB will suitably deploy resources based on the actual circumstances to conduct the relevant work.

5. The strategies adopted by the CMAB to promote the Constitution and the Basic Law include:

- (a) organising the 2023 Constitution Day Seminar;
- (b) using electronic means, online platforms and social media to promote widely to different strata of society, e.g. posting advertisements on social media for promotion of the videos on the Constitution and the Basic Law, designing online games, and co-producing different types of television programmes with the Radio Television Hong Kong to introduce the Constitution and the Basic Law in an easy-to-understand manner, such as “Talk About Basic Law With Photo” and the series of “Root & Origin: The Constitution”;
- (c) displaying large publicity banners outdoors, and producing publicity leaflets and posters on “One Country, Two Systems” for distribution to schools, public housing estates, etc.;
- (d) enhancing awareness and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law by the general public and students through promotional activities at the district level, (e.g. organising roving exhibitions and parent-child workshops at shopping centres in various districts, and arranging the mobile resource centre and the mobile game booth to pay visits to different districts and schools); and
- (e) providing sponsorship to non-governmental organisations or community organisations through the “Constitution and Basic Law Promotion Activity and Research Sponsorship Scheme” for staging various promotional and research activities on the Constitution and the Basic Law, such as promotion ambassador training schemes, speaking contests, quizzes and slogan design competitions, in order to get across the messages in the community.

#### Promotion of National Security Law

6. On promotion of the National Security Law, since the promulgation for implementation of the National Security Law in the HKSAR on 30 June 2020, the HKSAR Government has introduced the National Security Law to different people through different channels and means (including publishing pamphlets and compendium of articles, issuing press releases, placing newspaper advertisements, and officials taking part in interviews on television, radio and other media, and organising/attending seminars (including webinars),

etc.), as well as through the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, and has responded to concerns raised.

7. In addition, the HKSAR Government first launched the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition in July 2021 covering the importance of the National Security Law, the legal regime, enforcement mechanisms, major provisions and effectiveness, and introduction of the work of the disciplined forces in safeguarding national security, with mini games provided. As at 11 March 2024, the online virtual exhibition recorded over 560 000 visits. In July 2023, the Security Bureau (SB) launched the updated version of the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition with the Hong Kong Palace Museum as its virtual background, bringing a new touring experience to visitors. The SB has also prepared a series of souvenirs for distribution to bureaux/departments, schools and youth uniformed groups of disciplined services departments, with a view to promoting the online virtual exhibition mentioned above.

8. The SB and EDB jointly organised the “2023 Let’s Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security” Programme to encourage participation of teachers and students from all schools in the school bulletin board design competition, writing competition, slogan-cum-poster design competition and online quiz competition. The award presentation ceremony for the programme was held in early July 2023 to commend the winning schools and students, and the winning entries of the school bulletin board design competition, writing competition and slogan-cum-poster design competition were uploaded to the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition.

9. The SB, Department of Justice, EDB, and Hong Kong Shine Tak Foundation jointly organised the “Territory-wide Inter-school National Security Knowledge Challenge” in 2023/24, which aimed at enhancing students’ understanding of the Constitution, the Basic Law and the National Security Law. It was conducted in the form of a quiz, and was divided into four sections, i.e. the primary school and secondary school sections, both of which included team and individual competitions. Over 102 000 students from 585 primary and secondary schools participated in the Challenge.

10. Through their youth groups, the disciplined services departments under the SB have all along assisted youths to cultivate good character, positive thinking and law-abiding awareness, and facilitated their understanding of national development to enhance their sense of national identity. The disciplined services departments will continue their efforts in taking forward national security education for members of the youth groups, with a view to raising the awareness of national security among youngsters.

11. Furthermore, the HKSAR Government has produced Announcements in the Public Interest for broadcasting on television and radio, as well as at government buildings, online platforms and webinars, to highlight the effectiveness of the National Security Law in stopping chaos and restoring order in Hong Kong, and in ensuring the steadfast and successful implementation of the “One Country, Two Systems” principle as well as the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

12. In regard to primary and secondary schools, the EDB has been adopting a “multi-pronged and co-ordinated” approach, which includes enhancing curriculum guides, developing learning and teaching resources, offering teacher training, organising life-wide learning activities for students, etc., to support schools in holistically and systematically

planning and implementing national security education within and beyond the classroom. These endeavours enabled teachers and students to better understand the “holistic approach to national security”, grasp the importance of national security, and develop an awareness of and a sense of responsibility for safeguarding national security.

13. In future, the HKSAR Government will continue to allocate resources for its promotion work on the National Security Law through different channels (including online channels), so as to raise the national security and law-abiding awareness of Hong Kong residents, especially our youths. Major measures in 2024 include: to promote national security education to about 20 000 members of youth uniformed groups of disciplined services departments; continue to enhance the content of the Hong Kong National Security Law online virtual exhibition; continue to take forward the “Let’s Join Hands in Safeguarding National Security” Programme; and deepen the understanding of the international community of the National Security Law and its positive messages. In respect of foreign politicians’ and media’s smearing, false statements and reports, the Chief Executive, Secretaries of Departments and Directors of Bureaux will continue to make prompt refutations and clarifications. Furthermore, apart from enhancing the publicity of the National Security Law overseas, the overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices have been closely monitoring commentaries from foreign politicians and media, and will continue to refute smearing and false statements. Any external or internal destructive force and political conspiracy trying to interfere with the HKSAR’s determination to safeguard national security in accordance with the law will not succeed.

#### Promotion of Improved Electoral System

14. The HKSAR Government has spared no effort to explain to the people from all walks of life the necessity and urgency of improving the electoral system as well as the advancement and superiority of the new electoral system. On publicity work, the CMAB has earmarked around \$9.5 million to continue publicising and promoting the new electoral system in the 2024-25 financial year. For example, a series of educational videos will be produced for broadcast on television channels as well as digital and social media platforms, and various activities will be organised to introduce the electoral system to the public. In addition, the CMAB will upload the latest publicity materials and information to the thematic website on improving the electoral system for easy reference of the public.

#### Overall Expenditure and Staff Establishment Involved in the Promotion Work

15. Apart from the circumstances provided above, the HKSAR Government’s promotion work on various fronts mentioned above involves various bureaux and departments. The expenditure and staff establishment involved are absorbed by the overall provision of the respective bureaux and departments, and therefore no breakdown figures are available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB048**

**(Question Serial No. 2024)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Mainland and Taiwan Offices

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre under the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government commenced operation in 2023. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the existing staff establishment and the expenditure incurred last year of the Centre?
2. Please provide, in tabular form, the activities launched by the Centre in 2023-24, as well as the date, scale, expenditure and effectiveness of these activities.
3. What activities will be conducted by the Centre in 2024-25 to strengthen support for Hong Kong people and enterprises pursuing development in the Greater Bay Area?

Asked by: Hon TAN Yueheng (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

At present, 5 staff members have been deployed for the work of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre). For 2023-24, the revised estimated expenditure of the Promotion Centre is \$6.68 million.

2. The Promotion Centre, which officially came into operation in April 2023, is mainly responsible for further enhancing publicity and promotion in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area), as well as providing support for Hong Kong residents and enterprises there. In 2023-24, the Promotion Centre actively organised and participated in various types of activities on Greater Bay Area development, which mainly include:

- (a) Seminars and exhibitions – On the day of its inception in April last year, the Promotion Centre jointly organised the “GoGBA Greater Bay Area Development Day” seminar with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater



Bay Area Development Office and the Guangzhou Office of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, during which successful entrepreneurs and start-ups shared their experiences and exchanged views with participants on how to capitalise on the huge opportunities arising from Greater Bay Area development. Thereafter in 2023, the Promotion Centre organised seminars in different Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to enable participants to seize the business opportunities and expand their business networks, with each event attracting hundreds of participants.

- (b) Exchange activities for young people – the Promotion Centre has, as an ongoing effort, conducted visits to and exchanges with Hong Kong-Macao youth innovation and entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area. The Promotion Centre also organised a number of sharing sessions on youth innovation and entrepreneurship in different Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, which were well received by Hong Kong young people interested in pursuing development in the Greater Bay Area.
- (c) Study missions to the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area – the Promotion Centre has, on a number of occasions, assisted and arranged various Hong Kong organisations and groups to conduct visits to the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, and arranged for the delegates to meet with representatives from local governments and enterprises. For example, in end-2023, the Promotion Centre assisted a business delegation of enterprises of Belt and Road countries operating in Hong Kong to visit Guangzhou and Shenzhen so as to enhance delegates' understanding of the huge business opportunities in the Greater Bay Area.

3. Looking ahead, the Promotion Centre will continue to strengthen the liaison with Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, as well as the Mainland government agencies and related bodies, and to provide practical information and appropriate support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises. Examples include organising thematic seminars and briefings by representatives of relevant government departments and agencies on the latest support policies and preferential measures on entrepreneurship and employment for Hong Kong residents and enterprises in different cities of the Greater Bay Area, as well as on the problems encountered by Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland; organising exchange and business networking activities according to the needs of different industries; arranging more study missions to visit the Greater Bay Area cities for participants to learn more about the latest development and opportunities in these cities; and strengthening the co-operation with innovation and entrepreneurial bases in order to better support Hong Kong start-up teams etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1228)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The HKSAR Government has been striving to promote integration into the Greater Bay Area development in the recent few years. However, there are Legislative Council Members who recently remarked that since the promulgation of the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, not much has been achieved in the “integration” between Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area, and numerous impediments have been encountered in the flow of people, goods, information and capital, hence necessitating the co-ordination of the Central Government. For example, tariffs are imposed on mail items from Hong Kong to the Greater Bay Area cities, and talents under the Top Talent Pass Scheme find it difficult to remit money from the Mainland to Hong Kong for purchasing properties, starting businesses and setting up Mainland and Hong Kong companies. Besides, some members of the public indicated that Hong Kong people have experienced difficulties in using “mobile payment” in the Greater Bay Area. In this regard, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. How much manpower and resources will be earmarked to take forward the work on Hong Kong’s integration into the Greater Bay Area in the new financial year?
2. Is the Government aware of the above impediments to the integration process between the Mainland and Hong Kong? Has assessment been made on the negative impacts of the above impediments on promoting the integration into the Greater Bay Area?
3. What new proposals have been formulated by the Government to remove the above- mentioned barriers in the new financial year?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

At present, the number of staff in the existing establishment of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) is 31. The estimated

expenditure is about \$64.4 million. Separately, 5 staff members have been deployed for the work of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre established in Guangzhou and the estimated expenditure is about \$8.08 million.

2. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has all along attached great importance to the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area). Shortly upon the establishment of the current-term Government, the Chief Executive promptly set up the Steering Group on Integration into National Development (Steering Group). The Steering Group chaired by the Chief Executive co-ordinates the implementation of and provides steer on all work relating to Hong Kong's integration into the national development, including actively dovetailing with national strategies such as the development of the Greater Bay Area. The HKSAR Government also fully understands that one of the vital keys to taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area is the facilitation of the integrated development of the flow of people, goods, capital and information, with a view to achieving the goals of facilitating trade and talent development, as well as creating a sound environment for business development. After all, the Greater Bay Area is built upon the premise of one country, two systems, three customs territories and three currencies. The governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have to co-operate unremittingly and implement various policy measures, in order to effectively foster integrated development within the region.

3. Over the years, with the full support of the Central Government and the joint efforts of various parties, considerable positive outcomes have been achieved in different policy measures introduced to promote the efficient and smooth flow of important factors of production in the Greater Bay Area. These measures include "Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles", facilitation measures for two way flow of high-end talents in the Greater Bay Area, Greater Bay Area Legal Professional Examination, Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme, sea-air intermodal cargo-transshipment, Cross-boundary Wealth Management Connect Scheme 2.0, the Hong Kong Dollar-Renminbi Dual Counter Model, cross-boundary data flow, the measures of allowing wholly-owned Hong Kong enterprises to adopt Hong Kong law and to choose for arbitration to be seated in Hong Kong, the Greater Bay Area Standards, and the use of Hong Kong-registered drugs and common medical devices in designated Hong Kong-owned healthcare institutions in the Greater Bay Area, etc. These policy measures have played a pivotal role in supporting Hong Kong residents and enterprises to better grasp the opportunities in the Greater Bay Area, as well as in fostering high-level connectivity among cities of the Greater Bay Area.

4. Looking ahead, Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will continue to join hands in a concerted manner to strive for more policy innovations and breakthroughs, as well as the compatibility and alignment of rules and mechanisms, striving to resolve each and every difficulty and bottleneck, thereby further strengthening integrated development and facilitating business development by enterprises and talents, and for the better living of the people of the three places in the Greater Bay Area, with a view to achieving together the objective of developing the Greater Bay Area into an international first-class bay area ideal for living, working and travelling.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB050**

**(Question Serial No. 1419)**

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

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs  
(Ms Gracie FOO)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office, would the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The current number, establishment and ranks of staff of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office, as well as the expenditure involved;
2. The number, content and number of participants of the activities organised by the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office in the past 3 years, as well as the expenditure involved;
3. The Mainland cities with which the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office had liaison in the past 3 years; and the number, establishment and ranks of staff responsible for liaising with those cities, as well as the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

At present, the number of staff in the existing establishment of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office (the Office) is 31, including 4 Administrative Officers Staff Grade A/B/C; 4 Senior Administrative Officers/Administrative Officers; 8 Chief Executive Officers/Senior Executive Officers/Executive Officers I; 3 Chief Information Officer/Senior Information Officer/Information Officer; 6 Assistant Clerical Officers; 5 Senior Personal Secretary/Personal Secretaries I/Personal Secretary II; and 1 Motor Driver. The staff cost involved is about \$33 million.

2. The Office has strived to make use of diversified and multi-media means and channels, including traditional media, the Internet and social media platforms such as its thematic website and WeChat official account, as well as physical activities and exhibitions etc., to promote the significant opportunities of the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Greater Bay Area) to local, Mainland and overseas stakeholders. In collaboration with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC),

the Office has launched and continuously optimised the “GoGBA” digital platform, which provides support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises interested in tapping into the Mainland market of the Greater Bay Area. At the same time, the Office has co-organised with HKTDC a number of “GoGBA Development Day” events in Hong Kong and the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area every year which feature theme-based briefings about the huge opportunities in the Greater Bay Area. The Office also actively participates in “Education and Careers Expo”, “Entrepreneur Day” and roving exhibitions staged at local universities etc. so as to provide young people and members of the public with information about entrepreneurship and employment in the Greater Bay Area.

3. In addition, the Office also maintains close liaison with consulates in Hong Kong, chambers of commerce of various sectors, professional bodies, youth associations, think-tanks etc. Through organising and participating in online and offline symposiums, seminars and forums, the Office elucidates to these organisations and stakeholders the significance of Greater Bay Area development to Hong Kong.

4. Moreover, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government also established the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Promotion Centre (Promotion Centre) in April 2023. Through further strengthening strategic co-operation with HKTDC, Invest Hong Kong and relevant Mainland organisations and institutions, the Promotion Centre organises different types of activities including seminars and study missions, etc. for Hong Kong residents and enterprises pursuing development in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, so as to promote the opportunities brought about by Greater Bay Area development and to better understand their needs for providing them with practical assistance. At the same time, the Promotion Centre, through different forms of exchanges and promotional activities, encourages Mainland talents and enterprises to leverage Hong Kong’s unique advantages under “One Country, Two Systems” and pursue development in Hong Kong. The Promotion Centre also liaises with youth innovation and entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area to provide appropriate support to young entrepreneurs from Hong Kong.

5. In 2023, over 8 000 persons attended the promotional programmes and networking sessions mentioned above, and over 1 000 entrepreneurs and representatives of business firms were reached out proactively by the Office and the Promotion Centre.

6. In 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, the revised estimated expenditure of the Office for taking forward the development of the Greater Bay Area is about \$59.5 million, \$73.25 million and \$62.7 million respectively, of which about \$20 million, \$33.6 million and \$21.3 million is for publicity and promotion work respectively.

7. The Office is the main liaison unit of the HKSAR Government with the Mainland authorities and the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government on matters relating to the development of the Greater Bay Area. The Office has been maintaining close liaison with relevant Central Ministries and Commissions, the Guangdong Provincial Government, the Macao SAR Government and the municipal governments of the 9 Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, including arranging high-level visits and meetings, as well as conducting exchanges on various issues. As the above liaison work with the Mainland authorities (including the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area) and the Macao SAR Government is an integral part of the work of the Office, breakdown of manpower and expenditure involved in the liaison work with individual cities is not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****CMAB051****(Question Serial No. 1049)**Head: (163) Registration and Electoral OfficeSubhead (No. & title):Programme: Electoral ServicesControlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland AffairsQuestion:

1) Please set out in the following table the number of inquiry letters issued in relation to the registered residential addresses or registration eligibilities of electors in the current register and the number of electors removed from the register (by age group) over the past 5 years:

* Please indicate the “number of electors removed from the register (number of inquiry letters)” in the space provided	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Age 18-34					
Age 35-49					
Age 50-66					
Age 65 or above					

2) Please provide details of the current staff establishment for conducting checks on electors in the current register in respect of their registered addresses/registration eligibilities.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

In the voter registration cycles over the past 5 years, the number of geographical constituency (“GC”) electors subject to the statutory inquiry process and those included in the omissions lists based on the results of the inquiries are as follows:

<b>Voter registration cycle</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Number of GC electors subject to the statutory inquiry process *	77 973	96 967	60 202	71 112	99 771

<b>Voter registration cycle</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Number of GC electors included in the omissions lists based on the results of the inquiries *	49 171	56 456	42 216	59 880	81 169

\* Breakdown by age group not available for the figures

2. The current staff establishment of the Voter Registration Division responsible for voter registration matters under the Registration and Electoral Office is 124. The statutory inquiry process constitutes part of the voter registration work and its manpower involved cannot be itemised separately.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB052**

**(Question Serial No. 1050)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Please provide the total number of applicants who were unable to register as electors or update their residential addresses in the past year, and its percentage against the total number of applications? Please set out the reasons for and the percentage of the rejected applications.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

In the 2023 voter registration cycle, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) received a total of about 51 000 voter registration applications, about 18 600, or 36.4% of which failed to be registered within the cycle. The reasons for unsuccessful registration include the applicants not being permanent residents of Hong Kong at the time of submitting their applications, failure to provide a principal residential address in Hong Kong, or failure to submit proofs for their registered addresses upon application, etc.

2. During the same period, the REO received a total of 671 900 applications for change of particulars, about 8 900, or 1.3% of which could not be completed due to failure to provide address proofs for their updated residential addresses.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB053**

**(Question Serial No. 1051)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The number of elector records updated is expected to drop from 671,892 in 2023 to 224,000 in 2024. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) and the Immigration Department (ImmD) have put in place a standing arrangement that members of the public, when replacing their identity cards, may give consent to the ImmD for referring their particulars to the REO for updating their registration particulars at the same time. Given that the Territory-wide Identity Card Replacement Exercise of the ImmD was completed before commencement of the 2024 voter registration cycle, it is expected that requests for change of registration particulars through the channel will greatly reduce. Therefore, the number of elector records updated is also expected to drop substantially.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB054**

**(Question Serial No. 1052)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

In 2024-25, the election expenses are estimated to be \$527.719 million. Please provide details of the specific expenditure items and the relevant amounts.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The provisions reserved for election expenses in 2024-25 by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) is about \$528 million. The breakdown is as follows:

<b>Breakdown by expenditure items*</b>	<b>Amount of expenditure (\$ million)</b>
(1) Staff cost Preparation and conduct of the 2024 Voter Registration Campaign	57
(2) Preparation of the 2025 Legislative Council General Election <sup>#</sup>	379
(3) Other election-related expenditure <sup>^</sup>	92
Total	528

\* The personal emoluments of the civil service posts of the REO are not included.

# Including the provision for the preparation and conduct of the 2025 Voter Registration Campaign.

<sup>^</sup> Including the completion of all follow-up work of the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, and conduct of by-elections as and when necessary and practicable.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB055**

**(Question Serial No. 1053)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Please provide the details of the expenditures on various publicity items and activities of the 2023 Voter Registration Campaign, including measures such as deploying staff to set up registration counters at the Registration of Persons Offices of the Immigration Department and higher education institutions, reaching out to the community through broadcasting and advertisements, sending letters to remind electors to update their residential addresses, as well as using mobile applications and social media to disseminate the voter registration messages.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The various publicity initiatives and activities of the 2023 Voter Registration Campaign are set out in the paper submitted by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau to the Panel on Constitutional Affairs on 20 March 2023, which can be found at the following link: <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2023/english/panels/ca/papers/ca20230320cb2-205-4-e.pdf>.

2. In view that many promotional materials were shared among publicity and registration activities, and many publicity platform operators have provided cross-platform publicity services in recent years, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) no longer itemises publicity expenses from 2022 onwards. In 2023, the total publicity expenses of the REO for the Voter Registration Campaign amounted to \$13.6 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB056**

**(Question Serial No. 1054)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

In response to the failure of the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system in the evening on the polling day of the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, have any load and stress tests been conducted afresh for the EPR system? What are the estimated provision and relevant expenditure involved? In order to enhance the application of information technology (IT) in electoral arrangements, the Registration and Electoral Office needs to continuously upgrade its IT infrastructure, including the EPR system, what is the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Government introduced a new measure in November 2023 requiring departments to subject their large-scale electronic systems to additional load and stress tests to be conducted by an independent third party arranged by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO). In future elections, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) will, in accordance with the relevant requirement, pass the alterations to the EPR system to an independent third-party contractor arranged by the OGCIO for conducting independent load and stress tests, and examine and follow up on the test results and recommendations confirmed by the OGCIO. The Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) proposed in the Report on the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election a series of improvement recommendations in respect of the failure of the EPR system, which include enhancing the reliability and stability of election-related systems to ensure that future elections are conducted in a smooth, safe and orderly manner. The REO will actively follow up and implement the relevant recommendations. The EAC will make public the contents and recommendations of the Report in due course.

2. In addition, the Government will continue to proactively study the wider application of information technology with a view to improving election procedures and work efficiency, and facilitating various stakeholders. Before introducing any specific facilitation to electoral arrangements, we must ensure that elections are fair, just and honest, and further strike a proper balance among the application of information technology, efficiency enhancement, security risks, privacy protection and public confidence etc., so as to make the

elections more efficient and user-friendly. The resources and manpower required for the relevant work are absorbed in the recurrent expenditure and establishment of the REO and cannot be itemised separately.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB057**

**(Question Serial No. 1055)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

What are the reasons for the increase of 16 posts in 2024-25 despite the expected decrease in election expenses for 2024-25? What are the ranks, expenditure on emoluments and duties involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

In 2024-25, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) plans to create 22 additional civil service posts (including 1 Systems Manager, 5 Senior Executive Officer, 12 Executive Officer I, 2 Clerical Officer and 2 Assistant Clerical Officer posts). After discounting 6 posts to be deleted in the same year (including 1 Senior Executive Officer, 1 Executive Officer I, 2 Assistant Clerical Officer and 2 Clerical Assistant posts), the net increase of posts in the REO in 2024-25 is 16. These posts are used mainly for carrying out the relevant preparatory work for the 2025 Election Committee Subsector By-elections and the 2025 Legislative Council General Election. The increase of the relevant posts will result in a net increase of \$15.966 million in the notional annual mid-point salary value.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB058**

**(Question Serial No. 1059)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system was used for the first time in Hong Kong in the election for the Election Committee Subsector in September 2021. Please provide all the expenditures involved with regard to the EPR system from 2021 to 2023, including the recurrent and non-recurrent expenditures, scheduled maintenance or repair fees, number of staff administering the system and contract fee for the system operator.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) conducted an open tender in 2020 for the design, supply, implementation and maintenance services of the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system. A contract valued at about \$45 million was awarded in January 2021.

2. The REO started to gradually take over the EPR system subsequent to the 2021 Legislative Council General Election, and the takeover was completed during the 2022 Chief Executive Election. Since then, the Information Technology Management Division of the REO has been responsible for the administration, enhancement and maintenance of the system. As the expenditure on the administration and maintenance of the system (including staff costs) are part of the REO's recurrent expenditure, no breakdown figures are available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB059**

**(Question Serial No. 1158)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The Electronic Poll Register system failed on the polling day of the seventh District Council Ordinary Election, dampening the electors' desire to vote. Subsequently, the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) set up a dedicated group to investigate the incident. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. whether tenders were invited for the construction of the system? If so, the total number of quotations received and the expenditure on the procurement of the system;
2. the annual expenditure and manpower for the repair and maintenance work of the system after the Registration and Electoral Office took over the system in 2021;
3. whether the Administration has provided any training on the application and operation of the system for the polling staff? If so, the details;
4. Please set out in table form the number of system failures since the application of the system in the 2021 Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections, the relevant details and follow-up actions;
5. It is understood that the EAC has a "three-tier confirmation mechanism" for the system. However, it was not implemented during the alteration of system design in this election to ensure proper functioning of the system. How will the Administration prevent the recurrence of the same situation?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) conducted an open tender in 2020 for the design, supply, implementation and maintenance services of the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system. A total of three tenders were received and a contract valued at about \$45 million was awarded in January 2021.



2. The REO started to gradually take over the EPR system subsequent to the 2021 Legislative Council General Election, and the takeover was completed during the 2022 Chief Executive Election. Since then, the Information Technology Management Division of the REO has been responsible for the administration, enhancement and maintenance of the system. As the expenditure on the administration and maintenance of the system (including the staff costs) are part of the REO's recurrent expenditure, no breakdown figures are available.

3. With regard to the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, the REO provided a series of training on the application and operation of the EPR system for electoral staff of all levels, including organising hands-on practice sessions on the operation of the system and the counting of ballot papers for over 30 000 electoral staff, enabling them to practise in groups the issuing of ballot papers with the EPR system, and organising drill and simulated scenario sessions for staff at supervisory level, including step-by-step demonstration and practice of activating the contingency plans in the event of failure of the EPR system. Through training on handling simulated scenarios, the REO ensured that staff at supervisory level were familiarised with the relevant procedures and operation and would lead the polling staff to tackle unexpected events which might arise on the polling day. Meanwhile, the REO arranged technical training on the actual operation of the system for technical support staff to familiarise them with the procedures and skills of setting up the EPR system at the polling stations. Furthermore, the operational manual and training videos produced by the REO included dedicated chapters to explain the application and operation of the EPR system, as well as various relevant arrangements in case of the need to activate the fallback mode when there was a system failure.

4. Since the commissioning of the EPR system, there have been a total of 3 system-related incidents. The details and follow-up actions are set out below:

<b>The elections concerned</b>	<b>Details and follow-up actions</b>
2021 Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections	<p>At one of the polling stations, the time shown on the built-in clocks of the tablets installed with the EPR application was about two minutes behind the standard time of the Hong Kong Observatory. Therefore, when using the tablets to retrieve the number of ballot papers issued, the figure fell short of that recorded in the system by 2.</p> <p>For details, please refer to Part (D) of Chapter 14 of the Report on the 2022 Chief Executive Election (which covered the 2021 Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections).</p> <p><a href="https://www.eac.hk/pdf/chief/en/2022_CE_Report/2022ce_full_report.pdf">https://www.eac.hk/pdf/chief/en/2022_CE_Report/2022ce_full_report.pdf</a></p>
2021 Legislative Council General Election	The poll at 7 of the polling stations was suspended for 3 to 22 minutes due to power,

	<p>network connection or operation stability issues which affected the EPR system.</p> <p>For details, please refer to Part (A) of Chapter 14 of the Report on the 2021 Legislative Council General Election.</p> <p><a href="https://www.eac.hk/pdf/legco/2021LCE_Report/en/2021lce_full_report.pdf">https://www.eac.hk/pdf/legco/2021LCE_Report/en/2021lce_full_report.pdf</a></p>
2023 District Council Ordinary Election	<p>The EPR system failed in the evening on the polling day, and polling stations were unable to use the system for issuing ballot papers.</p> <p>For details, please refer to the press release issued by the EAC on 26 January 2024.</p> <p><a href="https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202401/26/P2024012600476.htm">https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202401/26/P2024012600476.htm</a></p>

5. The main cause of the failure of the EPR system was that when altering the system design, the REO technical team did not fully consider the impacts on loading that might be induced to the system during actual operation, and therefore did not conduct sufficient and comprehensive load tests. When submitting alterations to the other two tiers of the confirmation mechanism, the technical team did not adequately explain the details of the alterations and various possible impacts. As a result, the two latter tiers were unable to fully grasp the possible consequences of the alterations in programme design.

6. The EAC proposed in the Report on the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election a series of improvement recommendations in respect of the failure of the EPR system, which include enhancing the reliability and stability of election-related systems to ensure that future elections are conducted in a smooth, safe and orderly manner. The REO will actively follow up on and implement the relevant recommendations. The EAC will make public the contents and recommendations of the Report in due course.

7. Besides, the Government introduced a new measure in November 2023 requiring departments to subject their large-scale electronic systems to additional load and stress tests to be conducted by an independent third party arranged by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO). In future elections, the REO will, in accordance with the relevant requirement, pass the alterations to the EPR system to an independent third-party contractor arranged by the OGCIO for conducting independent load and stress tests, and examine and follow up on the test results and recommendations confirmed by the OGCIO. The REO believes this will help further ensure the security and stability of the system.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB060**

**(Question Serial No. 0118)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election held last year, will the Government inform this Committee of the revised estimated expenditure, the provision and its breakdown for the preparation and conduct of this Election?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The 2023 District Council Ordinary Election (DCOE) from the preparation to the completion of all follow-up work usually straddles several financial years. The preparatory work for the 2023 DCOE commenced in 2022-23 and the actual expenditure incurred in 2022-23 was about \$168 million. The revised estimate for 2023-24 and the provision for 2024-25 under the Registration and Electoral Office for the preparation and conduct of this election are about \$992 million and \$58 million respectively (including the provision for the preparation and conduct of the 2023 Voter Registration Campaign), with breakdown as follows:

<b>Expenditure on the preparation and conduct of the election</b>	<b>2023-24 (Revised estimate) \$ million</b>	<b>2024-25 (Provision) \$ million</b>
(1) Staff cost	235	27
(2) Publicity	122	0
(3) Other expenses (including the costs of hiring venues, manning polling and counting stations, financial assistance scheme, transportation, postage, free mailing, printing, and rental cost of temporary offices and stores, etc.)	635	31
Total	992	58

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB061**

**(Question Serial No. 2443)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Regarding the review of electoral arrangements, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the expenditure earmarked for the review of electoral arrangements for the current year?
2. As regards the failure of the Electronic Poll Register system in the District Council election last year which caused delays to the vote counting process, will the Government's review for the current year cover such failure? In this connection, have provisions been earmarked for improving the relevant systems and operational processes? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?
3. In respect of the measures adopted to facilitate electors with mobility difficulty to vote in the District Council election last year, what was the total number of related applications received by the Government? Could the arrangements for re-allocating the electors to other polling stations set up at venues with barrier-free facilities be completed before the polling day?
4. Has the Government received complaints that electors with mobility difficulty were unable to vote at the polling stations re-allocated to them on the polling day due to the faults made by the relevant staff and consequently lost their right to vote? Have the staff received punishment eventually? And has the Government reviewed the relevant mechanism accordingly? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 89)

Reply:

The resources required for the work relating to the review of electoral arrangements by the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) for the current year are absorbed in the REO's recurrent expenditure; a separate breakdown of the expenditure is not available.

2. As for the incident of the failure of the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system of the REO during last year's District Council election, according to the investigation, such incident occurred in the election because the REO's technical team had not handled the changes of some programmes of the EPR system properly. To improve the situation and prevent similar incidents in future, the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) proposed in the Report on the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election (DCOE) a series of improvement recommendations, including enhancing the reliability and stability of election-related systems to ensure that future elections are conducted in a smooth, safe and orderly manner. The REO will follow the EAC's recommendations and take appropriate measures, including rectifying the programmes concerned and adopting an improved monitoring mechanism, etc. The manpower resources involved in the relevant arrangements have been absorbed in the estimated expenditure of the REO.

3. In the 2023 DCOE, a total of 29 electors with mobility difficulty applied to the REO for re-allocation to other polling stations with barrier-free facilities to cast their votes, among which 27 electors were granted approval and 2 electors eventually chose to vote at their originally allocated polling stations, with appropriate assistance provided by the polling staff on the spot.

4. The EAC received two relevant complaints, in which the complainants had applied to the REO for re-allocation to other polling stations with barrier-free facilities to cast their votes and were informed that their applications had been approved. However, when they arrived at the re-allocated polling stations on the polling day, the staff therein informed them that their registration information was not available. Upon investigation, the REO found that the incidents were caused by staff members who had failed to update the system with the records of changes of polling stations for the above electors. The REO has reminded its staff to handle each application for re-allocation of polling station with care and caution, and strengthened the internal checking mechanism by having different staff members to double-check to confirm that the application has been properly handled, so as to prevent recurrence of similar incidents. The REO has taken serious follow-up actions against the unsatisfactory performance of the staff members involved, including making relevant records in the appraisal reports of the staff members concerned, and not offering renewals upon the expiry of their employment contracts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB062**

**(Question Serial No. 1370)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

Since Dr Hon Stephen WONG Yuen-shan ceased to hold office as an Election Committee constituency member of the Legislative Council (LegCo) upon his resignation in December 2022, the seat has been vacant for over 1 year up till now. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Will the Government arrange for a LegCo by-election in 2024-25? If so, what are the details of the related work plans, manpower and expenditure?
2. In view of the problems (such as electronic system failure) occurred in previous elections in Hong Kong, what are the specific enhancement measures on the electoral arrangements to be carried out by the Government to ensure the smooth conduct of elections?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The Government will maintain close communication with the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) and will consider matters related to the Legislative Council By-election based on the actual situation.

2. While the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system failed on the polling day of the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, the EAC had immediately decided to activate the fallback mode through which printed-form final register was used to issue ballot papers to electors, resulting in the smooth completion of the election.

3. The Government has strived to introduce various information technologies under the improved electoral system in recent years with a view to continuously making public elections more efficient and user-friendly. Examples include the extensive application of the EPR system for issuing ballot papers, and the use of an optical mark recognition system to facilitate vote counting etc. The Government will continue collaborating with the EAC to proactively study the wider application of information technology at various stages of the election

workflow, including voter registration as well as casting and counting of votes etc., with a view to improving work efficiency of elections and further facilitating various stakeholders. Nevertheless, before introducing any specific facilitation to electoral arrangements, we must ensure that elections are fair, just and honest, and further strike a proper balance among the application of information technology, efficiency enhancement, security risks, privacy protection and public confidence, etc. At the same time, the Registration and Electoral Office will also formulate a detailed election operation plan and conduct adequate and comprehensive staff training, rehearsals and system testings; establish a rigorous mechanism to monitor the development, management, maintenance and daily operation of computer systems; formulate emergency and contingency plans to strengthen on-site supervision and management, activate the Crisis Management Committee to handle unexpected incidents promptly when necessary, and critically review and learn from experience after the elections to continuously refine various arrangements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB063**

**(Question Serial No. 1701)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

The provision of \$800.741 million under Subhead 000 Operational expenses is for the salaries, allowances and other operational expenses of the Registration and Electoral Office (REO). The estimate for 2024-25 is nearly 40% lower than the revised estimate for 2023-24, which is due to the decreased requirements for election expenses. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The reasons for the expected net increase of 16 posts in the REO in the coming year when there is no election.
- (b) In the District Council election last year, there was the incident in which the system failed after multiple errors occurred. What are the roles to be performed by the 16 net additional posts in preventing the recurrence of a similar incident in future?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

In 2024-25, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) plans to create 22 additional civil service posts (including 1 Systems Manager, 5 Senior Executive Officer, 12 Executive Officer I, 2 Clerical Officer and 2 Assistant Clerical Officer posts). After discounting 6 posts to be deleted in the same year (including 1 Senior Executive Officer, 1 Executive Officer I, 2 Assistant Clerical Officer and 2 Clerical Assistant posts), the net increase of posts in the REO in 2024-25 is 16. These posts are used mainly for carrying out the relevant preparatory work for the 2025 Election Committee Subsector By-elections and the 2025 Legislative Council General Election.

2. As regards the incident concerning the Electronic Poll Register system, the Government and the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) have all along attached great importance to the safe and efficient conduct of public elections. Therefore, various stringent arrangements will be put in place when implementing any new technological initiatives in order to ensure that elections are conducted in a safe and orderly manner. Such arrangements include conducting pre-implementation assessments of security risks and



feasibility studies, engaging qualified and reliable contractors, conducting various security tests and load tests repeatedly, engaging third-party contractors to conduct security risk assessments, adopting multi-tier confirmation mechanism on security, as well as carrying out reviews on elections to gain experience and continuously enhance the relevant systems, etc. The Government and the EAC will continue to proactively study the application of various information technologies in future to enhance the effectiveness of public elections, and at the same time strive to ensure that elections are conducted smoothly in a fair, just, honest, safe and orderly manner.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB064**

**(Question Serial No. 1293)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

1. There will be a net increase of 16 posts in the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) in 2024-25. Given that no large-scale elections are to be held in 2024-25, what are the duties of 16 additional posts?
2. Given that an amount of \$527 million has been earmarked for election expenses in 2024-25, does the REO have any plan to conduct a by-election to fill a vacancy in the Legislative Council (LegCo)? If so, what is the plan? If not, how many vacancies in the LegCo and District Council are required for a by-election to be arranged?
3. The matters requiring special attention in 2024-25 includes "the review of electoral arrangements with a view to introducing more efficient and user-friendly measures in future elections". What are the measures being planned? Considering the current progress of computerisation in the REO, will there be more efficient measures, such as electronic counting, for introduction in the LegCo election to be held in 2025?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

In 2024-25, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) plans to create 22 additional civil service posts (including 1 Systems Manager, 5 Senior Executive Officer, 12 Executive Officer I, 2 Clerical Officer and 2 Assistant Clerical Officer posts). After discounting 6 posts to be deleted in the same year (including 1 Senior Executive Officer, 1 Executive Officer I, 2 Assistant Clerical Officer and 2 Clerical Assistant posts), the net increase of posts in the REO in 2024-25 is 16. These posts are used mainly for carrying out the relevant preparatory work for the 2025 Election Committee Subsector By-elections and the 2025 Legislative Council General Election.

2. The Government will maintain close communication with the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) and consider matters related to the Legislative Council By-election based on the actual situation.

3. Regarding the electoral arrangements, the Government has strived to introduce various information technologies under the improved electoral system in recent years with a view to continuously making public elections more efficient and user-friendly. Examples include the extensive application of the Electronic Poll Register system for issuing ballot papers, and the use of an optical mark recognition system to facilitate vote counting, etc. The Government will continue collaborating with the EAC to proactively study the wider application of information technology at various stages of the election workflow, including voter registration as well as casting and counting of votes etc., with a view to improving work efficiency of elections and further facilitating various stakeholders. Nevertheless, before introducing any specific facilitation to electoral arrangements, we must ensure that elections are fair, just and honest, and further strike a proper balance among the application of information technology, efficiency enhancement, security risks, privacy protection and public confidence etc., so as to make the elections more efficient and user-friendly.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CMAB065**

**(Question Serial No. 2383)**

Head: (163) Registration and Electoral Office

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: Electoral Services

Controlling Officer: Chief Electoral Officer (WANG Man-chiu, Raymond)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Question:

In December last year, the Government took “Cast your vote at DC election for a better community” as the slogan for the 2023 District Council (DC) Election and launched territory-wide publicity for this Election. Starting from 1 month before the polling day, the Government had been appealing to members of the public in Hong Kong to vote. Even the Chief Executive, several Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries all spared no efforts in publicising the polling day. Eventually, the Electronic Poll Register system failed in the evening of the polling day and many polling stations were once closed. After the re-opening of the polling stations, only the printed copies of the elector registers could be used. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. To advance the application of information technology, including the adoption of electronic ballot issuing and counting procedures, the Registration and Electoral Office was allocated provisions by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council last year to create a directorate post at D1 level as the consultant to handle the electoral and voter registration system. Regarding the above incident, the Government set up a dedicated investigation group to look into it. However, in this DC Election, the Government engaged an independent third party through the arrangement of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to conduct additional load tests and stress tests. What criteria does the Government have when choosing third party enterprises to conduct tests? What are the standards for the load tests and stress tests of this Election?
2. After this DC Election, will the Government consider following, introducing and studying the practices in other countries or regions, as well as providing technical guidance and support, etc. to solve the technical problems currently encountered in public elections?
3. The Government has listed the “Review on Electoral Arrangements” as one of its major initiatives. Nevertheless, electronic voting has yet been developed and implemented. What are the difficulties and reasons for not having fully implemented electronic voting so far? What is the Government’s total expenditure on the 2023 DC Ordinary Election?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The Government introduced a new measure in November 2023 requiring departments to subject their large-scale electronic systems to additional load and stress tests conducted by an independent third party arranged by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO). However, since the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system of the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) was launched in 2021 before the implementation of the new measure, and the subsequent programme alterations to the EPR system was also conducted before the new measure was effective, the EPR system was not subject to the additional load and stress tests by an independent third party arranged by the OGCIO as required under the measure. In the future, the REO will strictly adhere to the relevant measure to pass new or enhanced large-scale electronic systems of the REO to an independent third-party contractor arranged by the OGCIO for conducting relevant tests.

2. Currently, when conducting various public elections, in order to ensure the normal operation of electoral systems, the REO will arrange on-site technical team to support the operation of electoral systems, and take immediate remedial actions where necessary. Besides, various fallback and emergency plans that can be activated immediately in the event of an emergency are in place to ensure the smooth conduct of the election. In order to continuously improve the efficiency and security of elections, the REO will continue to adopt appropriate measures and proactively make reference to the good experience and advanced practices of other countries and regions with a view to continuously improving the effectiveness of elections.

3. It is indeed the target of the Government and the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) to continuously review and refine electoral arrangements. In different elections in the past few years, various parts of the election and electoral procedures have become electronic and automated, including the extensive application of the EPR system for issuing ballot papers, the use of an optical mark recognition system to facilitate vote counting, etc. The Government will continue collaborating with the EAC to proactively study the wider application of information technology at various stages of the election workflow, including voter registration as well as casting and counting of votes etc., with a view to improving electoral process and work efficiency, and facilitating various stakeholders. Nevertheless, before introducing any specific facilitation to electoral arrangements, we must also ensure that elections are fair, just and honest, and further strike a proper balance among the application of information technology, efficiency enhancement, security risks, privacy protection and public confidence etc., so as to make the elections more efficient and user-friendly. The REO will continue collaborating with the EAC to carefully study the feasibility of electronic voting.

4. As for District Council (DC) Ordinary Elections, the preparation to the completion of all follow-up work usually straddles several financial years. In respect of the 2023 DC Ordinary Election, the preparatory work commenced in 2022-23 and the actual expenditure incurred in 2022-23 was about \$168 million. The revised estimate for 2023-24 and the provision for 2024-25 under the REO for the preparation and conduct of this election are about \$992 million and \$58 million respectively (including the provision for the preparation and conduct of the 2023 Voter Registration Campaign).

- End -