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### Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2020-21

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Session No. : 12

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. S047)**

Head: (55) Government Secretariat : Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (Communications and Creative Industries Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Telecommunications

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) (Mr Clement LEUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The Government launched a pilot scheme for opening up more than 1 000 suitable government premises for the installation of radio base stations (RBSs) by operators in March 2019. 101 applications have been received, but only 4 have been approved so far with limited impact. Will the Administration inform this Committee of the following -

- (a) Has the Government assessed the reasons behind the unsatisfactory response to the pilot scheme? Is it attributable to inappropriate locations or complicated processes, and how to improve the pilot scheme?
- (b) Have any assessments been made to evaluate the number of additional RBSs required to provide full 5G network coverage for Hong Kong? According to the present situation, when will the installation of a sufficient number of RBSs be completed?

Asked by: Hon MOK Charles Peter

Reply:

- (a) As at 23 April 2020, the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) has received a total of 107 applications for the installation of radio base stations (RBSs) by operators, and 13 have been approved. The number of applications largely depends on operators' network rollout plans. According to OFCA's understanding, operators tend to add 5G equipment at premises with existing RBSs first. Operators are preparing technical proposals and will submit formal applications to the Government as and when ready. OFCA will continue to proactively provide assistance after receiving such applications.
- (b) The strategies and timetables for the rollout of 5G networks are commercial decisions of the operators. Experience shows that in developing a new generation of mobile services, operators generally adopt a gradual and orderly approach in rolling out networks, with coverage firstly provided to hotspots with high pedestrian flow and high usage and then gradually being extended to other locations in the territory.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CEDB(CCI)002**

**(Question Serial No. S062)**

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (LEUNG Ka Wing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

This is a follow-up question on the reply under Reply Serial Number CEDB(CCI)070:

(a) Would the Government please further provide a breakdown of the items under “general departmental expenses”, for comparison among “2019-20 original estimate”, “2019-20 revised estimate” and “2020-21 estimate”;

(b) Would the Government please explain in detail the items where expenses are reduced, that lead to a decrease of \$29.245 million in the “general departmental expenses” of the 2020-21 estimate when compared to that of the 2019-20 estimate.

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick

(The question was asked at 5:10 p.m. on 7 April 2020)

Reply:

(a) The scope of general departmental expenses of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) covers expenses that are directly related to the day-to-day running of the department, for instance, hire of services, temporary staff, contract maintenance, administration, and stores and equipment.

(b) The 2020-21 estimate of the general departmental expenses of RTHK is approximately \$29 million lower than the 2019-20 original estimate. This is mainly due to the cessation of Programme (3) School Education Television Programme with effect from 2020-21, and the switching off of analogue television services starting from 30 November 2020, leading to the lowering of expenditure required by the department.

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