

## Index Page

### 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. : 11

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Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
<a href="#">S-CEDB(CIT)01</a>	S054	KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis	152	(6) Travel and Tourism
<a href="#">S-CEDB(CIT)02</a>	S055	KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis	152	(2) Commerce and Industry
<a href="#">S-CEDB(CIT)03</a>	S057	CHU Hoi-dick	96	(-) -
<a href="#">S-CEDB(CIT)04</a>	S056	KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis	96	(-) -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CEDB(CIT)01**

**(Question Serial No. S054)**

Head: (152) Government Secretariat: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (Commerce, Industry and Tourism Branch)

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (6) Travel and Tourism

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism) (Miss Eliza LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Regarding the 3 visits organised by the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) from mid-2018 to early 2019, please advise on the expenditure involved for each visit.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis

Reply:

The expenditures of the 3 visits organised by the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong from mid-2018 to early 2019 were about \$410,000, \$290,000 and \$290,000 respectively.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CEDB(CIT)02**

**(Question Serial No. S055)**

Head: (152) Government Secretariat: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (Commerce, Industry and Tourism Branch)

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

Programme: (2) Commerce and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism) (Miss Eliza LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Regarding the business and professional missions to Belt and Road related countries and regions organised by the Belt and Road Office as stated in the reply of the Bureau, please set out the total expenditure incurred for each mission, and the respective costs of air tickets, accommodation and meals involved.

On the Hong Kong Trade Development Council's efforts in promoting commerce and trade co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan, and encouraging Taiwan enterprises to co-operate with Hong Kong companies and leverage on the Hong Kong's services platform to tap overseas and Mainland markets, please explain why the relevant expenditures have decreased year by year since 2017-18.

Please list the government departments and law courts which need to be relocated from the 3 government towers in Wan Chai North, with expected year of relocation by department.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis

Reply:

Regarding the business and professional missions organised by the Belt and Road Office in the previous three financial years, they were participated by representatives of enterprises and the professional services sector at their own expenses. Such missions were also participated by and organised with the support of other organisations/ bodies of Hong Kong and the Mainland, etc., including the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC). Our Bureau has not kept record of the total expenditure incurred for each mission and has not separately quantified the respective costs of air tickets, accommodation and meals involved.

HKTDC deploys resources flexibly to optimise promotional results, having regard to the goal, format of activity and focus of markets of every year's promotional efforts. Expenditure for its overseas offices may thus vary according to the actual requirements. The estimated expenditure of HKTDC for organising promotional activities in Taiwan for 2020-21 is similar to the expenditure in 2019-20.

Having consulted the Government Property Agency, under the relocation exercise, bureaux/departments have been relocating out of Revenue Tower since 2017. They include the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, Environment Bureau, Security Bureau, Drainage Services Department, Efficiency Office, Environmental Protection Department, Government Property Agency, Home Affairs Department, Hongkong Post, Inland Revenue Department, Labour Department, Legal Aid Department, Office of the Communications Authority, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, and Social Welfare Department.

Bureaux/departments have been relocating out of Immigration Tower since 2019. They include the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, Security Bureau, Audit Commission, Immigration Department, Inland Revenue Department, Innovation and Technology Commission, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, Transport Department, Treasury, and Water Supplies Department.

Bureaux/departments have been relocating out of Wanchai Tower since 2019. They include the Home Affairs Bureau, Census and Statistics Department, Correctional Services Department, Government Logistics Department, Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, and Judiciary.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CEDB(CIT)03**

**(Question Serial No. S057)**

Head: (96) Government Secretariat: Overseas Economic and Trade Offices

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism) (Miss Eliza LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

As a follow-up question to Reply Serial No. CEDB(CIT)210:

1. The Government stated that the Economic and Trade Office (ETO) in Washington, DC (the Washington ETO) met 100 officials and their staffers last year. Please provide a breakdown by the rank of these officials in table form.

	2019
Secretary	
Deputy Secretary	
Under Secretary	
Assistant Secretary	
Deputy Assistant Secretary	
Others	
Total	100

2. The Government stated that the Washington ETO met 140 congressional members and their staffers. Please provide the numbers of senators and congressmen that the Washington ETO met and indicate whether they are members of the Democratic Party or the Republican Party in table form.

	2019	
	The Democratic Party	The Republican Party
Senator		
Congressman		
Staffer		

3. Would the Government please provide, among the 140 United States congressional members and their staffers that the Washington ETO met last year, the numbers of congressional members who have joined the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations or the House Committee on Foreign Affairs?

Asked by: Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Reply:

The Washington Economic and Trade Office (ETO) has all along maintained regular contact with various sectors in the US, including high level federal government officials responsible for Hong Kong affairs in the White House, Department of State, Department of Commerce and US Trade Representative, Democratic and Republican congressional members and their staffers (including members and staffers of the Senate and House committees for foreign affairs), think-tanks, media, academia, business communities and other opinion leaders. Through meetings and various arrangements, the ETO works in earnest to facilitate people's understanding of the latest and actual situation in Hong Kong. The ETO met around 240 US government officials and congressional members/staffers last year, with around 100 being government officials and around 140 being congressional members and their staffers. In order not to affect the ETO's arrangements in meeting with various sectors in the US for exchange and explanation, we consider it not appropriate to provide a breakdown by rank or political affiliation of the number of US government officials, congressional members and their staffers whom the ETO meets.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-CEDB(CIT)04**

**(Question Serial No. S056)**

Head: (96) Government Secretariat: Overseas Economic and Trade Offices

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism) (Miss Eliza LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

The Berlin Economic and Trade Office (ETO) did not have any locally-engaged staff in 2018-19, but had 13 locally-engaged staff in 2019-20. Would the Government please explain the reasons for such a significant increase?

According to the information provided by the Bureau on the number of seminars, exhibitions and workshops organised by individual ETOs under Programme (1) "Commercial Relations" in the past 3 years, there is a decline of more than 10% in the number of such events organised by the London ETO in 2019 as compared to 2017 and a decline of more than 40% in the number of such events organised by the Tokyo ETO in 2019 as compared to 2018. Would the Government please explain the reasons for such a decline in the number of seminars, exhibitions and workshops organised by these two ETOs?

According to the information of the seminars, exhibitions and workshops organised by individual ETOs under Programme (1) "Commercial Relations" in the past 3 years as provided by the Bureau, please set out the following information in the table below:

ETO	Number of seminars, exhibitions and workshops organised and the total expenditure involved					
	2017		2018		2019	
	Number	Total expenditure	Number	Total expenditure	Number	Total expenditure
ETO A						

Would the Bureau please explain the reasons for an almost 25% decline in the number of calls on senior government officials/organisations (including congressmen) by the Sydney ETO under Programme (2) "Public Relations" in 2019 as compared to 2018?

Would the Bureau please explain the reasons for the decline in the number of public relations functions/events organised by the Tokyo and Washington ETOs under Programme (2) “Public Relations” in 2019 as compared to 2018?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wing-hang, Dennis

Reply:

Since its establishment in 2009, the Berlin Economic and Trade Office (ETO) has appointed local staff on non-civil service contract (NCSC) terms. There are currently a total of 13 NCSC staff. The creation of 13 locally-engaged staff posts in 2019-20 is to replace these NCSC positions.

The main reasons for the differences in the performance as achieved by individual ETOs on organising relevant activities under Programme (1) “Commercial Relations” and Programme (2) “Public Relations” in the past 3 years are as follows :

- To tie in with the Chief Executive (CE)’s attendance at the “Think Asia Think Hong Kong” Symposium hosted by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in London in 2017, the London ETO organised in addition a number of relevant activities. Therefore, the number of seminars, exhibitions or workshops organised under Programme (1) in 2017 was higher than those in 2018 and 2019.
- The Tokyo ETO organised a series of promotional activities under the “Hong Kong Week” during CE’s visit to Japan in 2018. Therefore, the number of seminars, exhibitions or workshops organised under Programme (1) and the number of public relations functions/events organised under Programme (2) in 2018 was higher than those in 2019.
- The Australian Government required time to form the government and the new term "Australia-Hong Kong Parliamentary Friendship Group" after the federal election was held in May 2019. Therefore, the number of calls made by the Sydney ETO on local senior government officials/organisations under Programme (2) in 2019 was less than that in 2018.
- In view of the concern of the various sectors in the United States about the social situation in Hong Kong in the second half of 2019, the Washington ETO focused its manpower on explaining the latest situation in Hong Kong to its interlocutors (including federal government officials, Congressional members and their staffers). Hence, the number of public relations functions/events organised under Programme (2) in 2019 was less than that in 2018.

The number of seminars, exhibitions and workshops organised by individual ETOs under Programme (1) in the past 3 years has been provided in our reply CEDB(CIT)213. As we do not specifically maintain a separate account for the expenses on seminars, exhibitions and workshops, the relevant statistics are not available.

- End -