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Controlling Officer : Director of Administration

Session No. : 8

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**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in
examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2012-13**

**Controlling Officer : Director of Administration
Session No. : 8**

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
<u>S-CSO01</u>	S026	PAN Pey-chyou	142	Efficiency Unit
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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-CSO01

Question Serial No.

S026

Head: 142 – Government Secretariat : Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Efficiency Unit

Controlling Officer: Director of Administration

Director of Bureau: Director of Administration

Question:

According to Reply Serial No. CSO022, will the Government advise of the following:

It was mentioned in reply (b) that the average time for departments to respond to the cases referred to them by the 1823 Call Centre was 6.5 days. What were the reasons for taking one week or so to respond? Did the response include the findings of the department's investigation?

Asked by: Hon. PAN Pey-chyou

Reply:

In 2011, around 90% of the cases referred to departments were complaints. Departments took an average of 7 days to contact the complainants on follow-up action or findings of their investigation. The remaining 10% of the referred cases were enquiries, the average response time for which was 2 days.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MISS JENNIFER MAK

Post Title: Director of Administration

Date: 19 March 2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-CS002

Question Serial No.

S027

Head: 142 – Government Secretariat : Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Efficiency Unit

Controlling Officer: Director of Administration

Director of Bureau: Director of Administration

Question:

How long does it take, on average, for the 1823 Call Centre to refer the complaints received to the departments concerned?

Asked by: Hon. PAN Pey-chyou

Reply:

In 2011, the average time for the 1823 Call Centre to refer complaints to departments was 1.5 hours.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MISS JENNIFER MAK

Post Title: Director of Administration

Date: 19 March 2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-CSO03

Question Serial No.

S028

Head: 142 – Government Secretariat : Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Efficiency Unit

Controlling Officer: Director of Administration

Director of Bureau: Director of Administration

Question:

With regard to Reply Serial No. CSO022, can the Government advise:

The reply in paragraph (d) indicates that the staff turnover rate of the 1823 Call Centre has reached 1/5 to 1/4 in the past few years and the situation has worsened gradually. As the Call Centre is a frontline agency serving the public, has the administration assessed the reasons for the high turnover rate and devised measures to reduce the turnover rate to improve its quality and stability? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. PAN Pey-chyou

Reply:

Given the nature of call centre work, a relatively high turnover rate is to be expected. The increased turnover rate in the past two years was mainly the result of better labour market conditions. Despite the turnover, it should be noted that the average staff levels, customer satisfaction and performance have all increased, indicating that the measures being taken by the Call Centre to recruit, train and equip staff are effective. The Call Centre does seek to retain staff through attractive remuneration package, gratuity and additional annual leave on contract renewal. Staff motivation schemes to reward good performance are also in place.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MISS JENNIFER MAK

Post Title: Director of Administration

Date: 19 March 2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-CSO04

Question Serial No.

S030

Head: 142 – Government Secretariat : Offices of
the Chief Secretary for Administration and
the Financial Secretary

Subhead (No. & title): 000 Operational expenses

Programme: (3) CSO – Administration Wing

Controlling Officer: Director of Administration

Director of Bureau: Director of Administration

Question:

According to the Reply Serial No. CSO037, the provisions for filling vacancies, payment of salaries for officers on pre-retirement leave and officers on temporary deployment to the Office of the Chief Executive-elect and payment of annual increments only amount to \$14.1 million. However, the increase in provision under this programme is more than \$100 million. How would the remaining amount of the increase in provision be used? Would it include the expenses of setting up the Office of the Chief Executive-elect? If so, what is the amount of such expenses?

Asked by: Hon. PAN Pey-chyou

Reply:

The increase is also due to the lower-than-expected expenditure in hire of service and professional fees in 2011-12 and anticipated increase in expenditure for general departmental expenses. Provision of \$8.289 million has been earmarked in 2012-13 for the establishment of the Office of the Chief Executive-elect.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MISS JENNIFER MAK

Post Title: Director of Administration

Date: 19 March 2012

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

S-CSO05

Question Serial No.

S029

Head: 142 – Government Secretariat : Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (4) Efficiency Unit

Controlling Officer: Director of Administration

Director of Bureau: Director of Administration

Question:

According to Reply Serial No. CSO034, will the Government advise of the following –

- (a) While 263 non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff are currently employed as Customer Service Officers at the 1823 Call Centre to handle calls and emails, only 1 telephone operator is employed on civil service terms to do work of a similar nature. Is it because the Administration consider the service provided by the Call Centre might not be needed in the long run or are there any other reasons for the Call Centre not to employ civil servants?
- (b) Would the Administration consider converting those NCSC staff with good performance or long service to civil servants so as to reduce staff turnover and improve the services provided?
- (c) Does the Government have any long-term plan to contract out the services of the Call Centre?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- (a) The one telephone operator employed on civil service terms is the one remaining operator transferred to the Call Centre from another department in 2003. Given the nature of the work and the rapid fluctuations in workload, the use of NCSC staff, both full time and part time, will provide much more flexibility to meet changing business needs. It is probable that, over time, greater adoption of web and mobile based services by the community will reduce the reliance on the telephone channel.
- (b) The nature of the work lends itself to a high market turnover, irrespective of whether staff are employed on NCSC or civil service terms. In 2011, the market turnover rate is 21%. The Call Centre has taken various measures to retain staff including attractive remuneration package, gratuity and additional annual leave on contract renewal. Various staff motivation schemes are also in place to reward good performers. Many of the good performers have applied through open recruitment for appointment to positions at supervisory, training and management levels.
- (c) Contracting out of the Call Centre service has been considered. Some experiments with hire of services were performed several years ago. The findings were that there is not a good business case for contracting out the Call Centre service and this idea is not being pursued.

Signature: _____

Name in block letters: MISS JENNIFER MAK

Post Title: Director of Administration

Date: 19 March 2012