

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)016

Question Serial No.

1541

Head : 138 Government Secretariat :
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
(Planning and Lands Branch)

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : Following the implementation of the Accountability System, a new Programme (1) Director of Bureau's Office with relevant estimated expenses is introduced for all policy bureaux in their budgets for the year 2003-04, with a view to ensuring the smooth operation of the offices of the Bureau Directors.

- (1) With regard to the estimated expenses of the offices of the Directors of bureau, please provide a detailed breakdown by (a) purpose (including the planning, co-ordination and implementation of all arrangements for the Secretary's public, media and community functions); (b) items (salaries and establishment, allowances, job-related allowances and departmental expenses);
- (2) Please provide a comparison between the expenditure breakdown listed in (1) and the actual expenditure required for the smooth operation of the offices of the Directors of bureau before the implementation of the Accountability System. If the amount of expenses for specific items shows an increase, please give the reasons.
- (3) Has the Administration assessed whether the estimated expenditure of the offices of the Directors of bureau is appropriate? What principles have been adopted in assessing its appropriateness?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Chu-ming, Martin

Reply :

- (1) The financial provision of the Director of Bureau's Office includes the salaries and allowances of the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (SHPL) and staff in his office. The staff in SHPL's office provides him with support covering different facets of duties. It would not be possible to analyze the provision by purpose/functions. The breakdown of the financial provision in 2003-04 by expenditure items and establishment is as follows-

Salaries for SHPL	\$ 3,232,000
Salaries and allowances for supporting staff (comprising Administrative Assistant, Personal Assistant, Personal Secretary I, Clerical Assistant and Chauffeur)	<u>3,145,000</u>
Total :	<u>6,377,000</u>

- (2) Prior to the implementation of the Accountability System, there was no Director of Bureau's Office. Moreover, the duties of SHPL are also different from those of the former Secretary for Planning and Lands and the former Secretary for Housing. It is, therefore, difficult to provide a comparison of the expenditure of the respective posts.
- (3) Based on the principle of operating the Director of Bureau's Office with minimum resources, the estimated provision for the Office of SHPL for 2003-04 is considered appropriate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Thomas Tso

Post Title _____ Acting Permanent Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)

Date _____ March 2003