

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2003-04

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

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Question Serial No.

1105

Head : 118 - Planning Department

Subhead (No. & title) : --

Programme : (1) – Territorial and Sub-regional Planning

Controlling Officer : Director of Planning

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : What accounts for the steady decrease in the number of projects on territorial and sub-regional planning? The number of surveys and study projects for territorial and sub-regional planning strategies decreased from 516 in 2001 to 376 in 2002, and is estimated to drop by 21.5 per cent to 295 in 2003. The number of forecasts and reports related to the matter will drop by 11.2 per cent 350 in 2003. What do you plan to do with the resources released from the reduced workload?

Asked by : Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply :

The reduction in the number of surveys, reports, papers and study projects between 2001 and 2003 is due to :-

- (a) In 2001, a number of studies were at the “peak” of their study process with the production of a substantial number of surveys, reports and papers (516). In 2002, the number dropped as some studies such as the Metroplan Review were in the final stage. Papers in the final stage of studies e.g. final reports, though less in number, are usually far more complex and they require more time and efforts for preparation. During this period, there were also a number of new/on-going studies e.g. Study on Landscape Value Mapping of Hong Kong, Study on Planning for Pedestrians, HK2030: Planning and Vision Strategy, etc.
- (b) Such pattern of studies output is expected to be repeated in 2003. Fewer but more complex reports would be produced. As mentioned above, the output statistics do not reflect the complexity and degree of intricacies in compilation of the reports and papers. In addition, new studies such as the Review on Shopping Habits will be started this year. The workload of territorial and sub-regional planning has maintained a broadly comparable level between 2001 to 2003.
- (c) The reduction in report output figures relating to matters on population distribution and supply and demand of land for major uses also reflects reduced housing-related planning activities in line with the latest government policy on housing. In this connection, 2 directorate posts have been deleted and 3 non-directorate posts would be deleted in 2003-04. Staff have also been redeployed to take up other work, such as monitoring the demand and supply of major land uses, undertaking system development of electronic delivery of planning information, and providing planning input to major cultural and tourism projects. In particular, workload would be substantially increased in our current efforts to enhance

our geographical information system to monitor the overall demand and supply of major land uses, including office, industrial and residential uses.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>B C K FUNG</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Planning</u>
Date	<u>20 March 2003</u>