

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB125**

**(Question Serial No. 3014)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

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

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

One of the items under operational expenses of the Government is “expenses of visitors to Hong Kong and overseas speaking engagements”. The Government will launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme to sponsor renowned scholars and industry leaders to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. Please provide:

1. The sponsorship quota and expenditure of the overseas speaking engagements under expenses of visitor to Hong Kong and overseas speaking engagements over the past year; and
2. The yearly sponsorship quota and estimated expenditure under the new programme in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. Over the past year, the expenses under the “overseas speaking engagements” of the “expenses of visitors to Hong Kong and overseas speaking engagements” were mainly related to the expenditure incurred by arranging the Information Services Department (ISD) staff to support senior government officials when they paid visits or led delegations to pay visits outside Hong Kong. No speaking engagement sponsorship was involved.
2. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, ISD will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world. These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB126**

**(Question Serial No. 3017)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The aim of this Programme is to promote a favourable image of Hong Kong internationally and in the Mainland. The estimated provision of 2024-25 has increased by 2.3% as compared with the revised provision of 2023-24. Please provide:

1. the respective expenditure on promoting Hong Kong internationally and in the Mainland over the past year; and
2. the respective estimated provision planned for promoting Hong Kong internationally and in the Mainland in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

To tell the good stories of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) has been adopting various publicity measures to promote the advantages, potentials and opportunities of Hong Kong in the overseas and Mainland regions. The major measures in 2023-24 include collaborating with major local, Mainland and international media to produce publicity content and place advertisement; using multimedia channels and networks, such as promotion via social media and digital platforms; holding roving overseas exhibitions to showcase the appeal of Hong Kong through art technology; partnering with mega event organisers to promote Brand Hong Kong; making tailor-made arrangements for prominent political, business and media leaders from the Mainland and overseas to visit Hong Kong on sponsorship. These visitors can see for themselves the latest developments in the city, and bring home the good stories of Hong Kong. ISD will continue to implement relevant publicity measures to promote Hong Kong in the coming year.

Since most of the publicity measures are carried out in the overseas and Mainland markets at the same time with some applicable to both markets, we are not able to provide the relevant costs separately.

The expenditure of the above external promotion and publicity measures falls under Programme (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong. The revised estimate for 2023-24 is \$175.2 million, while the estimate for 2024-25 is \$179.2 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0322)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

It was mentioned in paragraph 61 of the Budget Speech that Hong Kong would launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme ("SOSEP"). Renowned scholars and industry leaders would be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong. Would the Government inform this Council of the following:

- 1) At present, university scholars are already sponsored by universities to attend overseas academic conferences. What is the specific coverage of SOSEP? For example, the United Nations or public hearings held by the United States and western countries and the estimated expenditure incurred; and
- 2) The above events may be short notice in nature. What is the estimated manpower earmarked for approving SOSEP, and whether performance indicators have been set?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra

allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2291)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that apart from inviting visitors to our city, we will continue to go global, visiting regions and markets to tell the good stories of Hong Kong and expand our circle of friends. We will also launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme. Renowned scholars and industry leaders will be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. In this connection, will the Government inform this council of:

1. the estimated expenditure and manpower of the Government;
2. whether the key promotion targets of Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme include Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Belt and Road countries; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons; and
3. whether Key Performance Indicators have been set for reviewing the effectiveness; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong overseas, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Belt and Road countries, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB129**

**(Question Serial No. 0356)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong  
(2) Local Public Relations and Public Information

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletcher CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The Information Services Department (ISD) has created accounts on various social media platforms to disseminate Government information and enhance the promotion of Hong Kong around the world. In this connection, please inform this Council of the following:

- 1) please list out the Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs), as well as the production expenditure, platforms of release and the number of views online in the past 5 years;
- 2) the number of followers and average growth rate of *news.gov.hk*-related social media platforms and Tamar Talk Facebook page in the past 3 years; and
- 3) whether ISD has any plans to expand its accounts on various social media platforms such as Xiaohongshu, Douyin and Tik Tok, so that members of the public at all levels could directly receive information disseminated by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government; if so, what is the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon CHEN Chung-nin, Rock (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- 1) Government Television (TV) Announcements in the Public Interest (APIs) are produced and funded by bureaux/departments (B/Ds), with technical assistance provided by the Information Services Department (ISD). The ISD does not keep a centralised record of the details of the TV APIs produced by other B/Ds.

TV APIs are mainly produced for broadcast on 27 channels of 5 local TV stations. We have also uploaded the TV APIs to ISD YouTube channel and website to increase the publicity channels and for record purposes. The ISD also makes use of social media platforms including those under *news.gov.hk* and Tamar Talk to enhance publicity of these APIs as appropriate.

The TV and radio APIs produced by the ISD, and the production cost in the past 5 financial years (2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24), are set out in the following tables:

2019-20

Titles of TV and radio APIs	Production cost (\$) - mainly for TV broadcast
2019 Policy Address Public Consultation	450,000
Treasure Hong Kong, our home (I) (2 TV API versions lasted for 60 seconds and 30 seconds respectively)	610,000
Celebrating the 70 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of The People's Republic of China (TV API only)	450,000
The Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address (Collection of Copies)	340,400
The Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	1,369,072
The Chief Executive's 2019 Policy Address (Land and Housing) (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	
Treasure Hong Kong, our home (II)	455,000
Say NO to VIOLENCE (TV API only, lasted for 15 seconds)	Not applicable (in-house production)
Check facts to keep fake news in check	498,000
2020-21 Budget Public Consultation	850,000
2020-21 Budget (Collection of copies)	
Stop violence Think rationally	499,470
Say "no" to violence Give peace a chance (TV API only, lasted for 15 seconds)	19,750 (post production)

2020-21

Titles of TV and radio APIs	Production cost (\$) - mainly for TV broadcast
Stop Violence (Think of the Consequences)	249,735
Have Faith, Together We Fight the Virus (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	240,000
Upholding national security (TV API only, 15-second)	19,750 (post production)
Legislation on national security in Hong Kong	43,100 (post production)
The Chief Executive's appeal to public in fight against COVID-19 (TV API only)	Not applicable (In-house production)
Universal Community Testing Programme (1)	887,000
Universal Community Testing Programme (2)	

Titles of TV and radio APIs	Production cost (\$) - mainly for TV broadcast
2020 Policy Address Public Consultation	50,000
The Chief Executive's remarks on national security legislation in Hong Kong (TV API only)	Not applicable (in-house production)
The Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address (Live broadcast and viewing online)	307,050
The Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	1,330,975
2021-22 Budget Public Consultation	724,830
2021-22 Budget (Announcement)	

### 2021-22

Titles of TV and radio APIs	Production cost (\$) - mainly for TV broadcast
2021 Policy Address Public Consultation	90,000
The Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address (Collection of Copies)	415,000
The Chief Executive's 2021 Policy Address (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	1,150,000
2021 Legislative Council General Election - Casting your vote for Hong Kong (TV API lasted for 15 seconds)	Not applicable (in-house production)
2022-23 Budget Public Consultation	499,328

### 2022-23

Titles of TV and radio APIs	Production cost (\$) - mainly for TV broadcast
A New Era – Stability. Prosperity. Opportunity (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	1,380,000
HKSAR 25th Anniversary celebration events	495,000
2022 Policy Address Public Consultation	408,000
Young children should get vaccinated (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	26,000 (post production)
Young children can safely receive Sinovac vaccine (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	26,000 (post production)
The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address (Collection of Copies)	448,000
The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	1,400,000
2023-24 Budget Public Consultation	502,000
The Chief Executive's Lunar New Year message 2023 (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	500,000

2023-24

Titles of TV and radio APIs	Production cost (\$) - mainly for TV broadcast
Happy Hong Kong	709,000
First year work of the current-term Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	890,000
2023 Policy Address Public Consultation	999,970
The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address (Collection of Copies)	
The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	1,397,000
1210 Cast your vote at DC election (Chinese TV API only)	Not applicable (in-house production)
1210 Cast your vote at DC election (with Badminton Athletes)(Chinese TV API only, lasted for 15 seconds)	Not applicable (in-house production)
2024-25 Budget Public Consultation	598,000
The Chief Executive's Lunar New Year message 2024 (TV API lasted for 60 seconds)	460,000
Day and Night Vibes in 18 Districts Come visit us for a complete vibe experience! (Chinese TV API only)	6,720 (voiceover recording)
New promotional logo to publicise Government-funded projects (TV API only)	46,880 (voiceover recording and buying footage)
Asia's Events Capital, Hong Kong (TV API only)	Not applicable (in-house production)
Asia's Events Capital, Hong Kong (Mar 2024) (TV API only)	Not applicable (in-house production)

- 2) The number of followers in 2023 and the average rate of increase in the past 3 years for news.gov.hk social media platforms and Tamar Talk Facebook are as follows:

	Followers (2023)	Average Rate of Increase (2021-2023)
news.gov.hk Facebook	170 787	6.2%
Instagram (Chinese)	86 734	11.4%
Instagram (English)	13 067	32.2%
X (formerly known as Twitter) (Chinese)	84 062	33.4%
X (formerly known as Twitter) (English)	49 393	20.5%
YouTube	73 057	5.9%
WeChat (微信)	63 574	9.4%
Weibo (微博)	1 232 240	1.9%

	Followers (2023)	Average Rate of Increase (2021-2023)
Tamar Talk Facebook	53 000	2.9%

- 3) The Government has all along been disseminating information through various channels. We will continue to keep track of the latest market development and global trend, and make use of different social media platforms to disseminate government information and promote government messages.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB130**

**(Question Serial No. 1726)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The Budget Speech indicates that apart from inviting visitors to our city, we will continue to go global, visiting regions and markets to tell the good stories of Hong Kong and expand our circle of friends. The Government will also launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme. Renowned scholars and industry leaders will be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. What are the objectives and specific details of the programme, including eligibility criteria and application requirements, application and approval procedures, sponsorship quota and amount, the cost and manpower incurred and the implementation schedule, etc.?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB131**

**(Question Serial No. 1188)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 61 of the Budget Speech that the Government would launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme (the Programme). Renowned scholars and industry leaders would be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. Will the Government inform this Council of the following:

1. the estimated provision earmarked and the estimated establishment incurred for implementing the Programme;
2. please provide a breakdown of (i) the estimated total sponsorship amount to be provided for the Programme by year; (ii) the estimated number of sponsorship quota for the Programme to be provided a year; and (iii) the maximum sponsorship to be received by each applicant;
3. the eligibility criteria (e.g. (i) the background of professional qualifications of the applicants and (ii) the scale of participation in events) for the Programme;
4. whether the Government will consider the Programme as time-limited; if so, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons;
5. has the Government set Key Performance Indicators for the Programme; if so, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons; and
6. has the Government set a timeline for evaluating the effectiveness of the Programme; if so, what are the details and the implementation schedule; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-

supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB132**

**(Question Serial No. 1814)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

As regards the Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme (hereafter "the Programme, will the Government inform this Council of :

- (1) the manpower and estimated expenditure incurred by the Programme;
- (2) the mode of operation of the Programme;
- (3) the role of overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices in the Programme; and
- (4) how will the effectiveness of the Programme be evaluated by the Government?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at events held abroad and supported by the Hong Kong SAR Government, including its overseas Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs), such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. Suggestions will be sought from ETOs on suitable persons to be invited to join the programme. With their professional background and external network, the invited speakers would be ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the above programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB133**

**(Question Serial No. 1827)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (3) Public Opinion

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

It is learnt that the Information Services Department (ISD) always monitors opinion expressed in the media and popular social media platforms and the public's reaction to Government's policies and initiatives. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the following?

- (1) In the past two financial years, the (i) establishment; (ii) strength; and (iii) total payroll cost incurred by ISD for monitoring the public opinion by year;
- (2) Apart from Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X (formerly called Twitter), Xiaohongshu and Weibo, what other social media platforms will the Government browse; and
- (3) In view of the heavy workload of obtaining the public opinion online, will the Government explore to handle it with the help of artificial intelligence (AI) system; if yes, what are the details?; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- (1) The Information Services Department (ISD) has been monitoring media reports and messages posted on major social media platforms at the headquarters level and through Information Officers stationed at various bureaux and departments. Social media monitoring services using advanced tools such as big data analytics and computer programmes are also procured to grasp public opinions and sentiments expressed online in a timely manner. When there are rumours or false information relating to the work of the HKSAR Government causing misunderstanding or negative sentiments in the community, the ISD promptly liaises with the concerned bureaux or departments to disseminate correct information and make clarifications through various channels as soon as possible, so as to alleviate public concerns and curb the spread of rumours. This is part of the day-to-day work of the department and we are not able to single out the exact manpower involved and expenses incurred.
- (2) The ISD has been keeping a close watch on public opinions expressed on major social media platforms to help bureaux and departments stay abreast of public sentiments on

subjects under their purview. Hong Kong and the Mainland are closely connected with a growing number of Mainland netizens sharing and discussing government policies and the social situation in Hong Kong. In addition to Facebook, Instagram and YouTube which are commonly used by local people, there is a need for the ISD to expand the scope of its public opinion monitoring to cover popular Mainland social media platforms such as Weibo, Xiaohongshu and Douyin and update the monitoring scope from time to time as necessary, so as to grasp online public opinions in a timely manner.

- (3) The ISD utilises outsourced services making use of advanced tools such as big data analytics and computer programmes to monitor social media platforms for discussions relating to the work of the HKSAR Government, with the help of human input for analysis and compilation for enhanced accuracy and reliability. As the development of artificial intelligence (AI) is evolving, the department will keep track of the latest market developments and global trends with a view to devising suitable plans based on our operational needs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB134**

**(Question Serial No. 2575)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The Government will launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme (the Programme). Renowned scholars and industry leaders will be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the following:

- 1) What is the estimated expenditure breakdown and manpower arrangement for the Programme in the coming year?
- 2) Has set a ceiling for the number of sponsorship, transport and accommodation expenditure been set for the Programme? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
- 3) Scholars and persons from which realm or sector would mainly be sponsored by the Programme in attending overseas events? Is the Programme inclined to sponsoring conferences to be attended in countries and regions along the Belt and Road to tie in with the country's policy?
- 4) Will an implementation schedule and relevant performance indicators for the Programme be set?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

Major aspects for promotion include sectors where Hong Kong enjoys clear advantages, such as finance, innovation and technology, trade, legal, shipping, aviation, and intellectual property, etc., under the 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, the Belt and Road Initiative, and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, our world-class talent and infrastructure, culture, and quality education.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong overseas, including the Belt and Road countries and regions, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB135**

**(Question Serial No. 2424)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (2) Local Public Relations and Public Information

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The Information Services Department (ISD) has been creating social media platform accounts, with a view to enhancing members of public's understanding in public information and services. In this connection, please inform this Council of the following:

- 1) as mentioned in the Budget Speech that the financial provision for Local Public Relations and Public Information of this year recorded an increase of 9.7% as compared with the original provision of 2023-24, what are the details;
- 2) please list out the number of followers, rate of increase in the number of followers, as well as number of posts, infographics and videos posted per month and the production expenditure of the social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, Weibo, Youku, over the past year;
- 3) have work plans and Key Performance Indicators (KPI), such as increase in number of followers, number of posts per month, views of the videos, been devised? If so, what are the specific work plans, KPIs and expenditure incurred; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- 1) The estimate for 2024-25 under Programme (2) Local Public Relations and Public Information is 9.7% higher than the 2023-24 original estimate. This is mainly due to the increased provision for salaries and related expenses.
- 2) The number of followers for news.gov.hk social media platforms and Tamar Talk Facebook in 2023 and the rate of increase in the past year:

	Followers (2023)	Increase in the number of followers (compared with 2022)	Rate of increase
news.gov.hk Facebook	170 787	4 417	2.7%

	Followers (2023)	Increase in the number of followers (compared with 2022)	Rate of increase
Instagram (Chinese)	86 734	9 924	12.9%
Instagram (English)	13 067	2 616	25%
X (formerly known as Twitter) (Chinese)	84 062	15 262	22.2%
X (formerly known as Twitter) (English)	49 393	3 393	7.4%
YouTube	73 057	1 237	1.7%
WeChat	63 574	4 444	7.5%
Weibo	1 232 240	11 940	1%
Tamar Talk Facebook	53 000	1 500	2.9%

The number of posts issued each month in 2023 on news.gov.hk social media platforms and Tamar Talk Facebook:

2023	news.gov.hk Facebook	Instagram (Chinese)	Instagram (English)	X (Chinese)	X (English)	We Chat	Weibo	Tamar Talk Facebook
January	181	36	9	216	187	60	75	76
February	201	48	18	198	167	55	106	99
March	141	23	6	248	215	57	106	64
April	147	21	6	218	172	50	99	59
May	160	25	5	243	200	47	94	58
June	148	25	5	218	190	30	101	68
July	190	34	16	234	196	56	94	50
August	133	14	6	211	186	43	80	54
September	192	21	7	253	211	56	130	59
October	228	35	6	252	192	58	133	66
November	172	12	7	280	241	63	135	71
December	184	23	13	242	188	67	117	75
<b>Yearly total</b>	<b>2 077</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>2 813</b>	<b>2 345</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>1 270</b>	<b>799</b>
<b>Monthly average</b>	<b>173.1</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>234.4</b>	<b>195.4</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>105.8</b>	<b>66.6</b>

The number of infographic issued each month in 2023 on news.gov.hk social media platforms and Tamar Talk Facebook:

2023	news.gov.hk Facebook	Instagram (Chinese)	Instagram (English)	Tamar Talk Facebook
January	57	25	1	40

2023	<i>news.gov.hk</i> Facebook	Instagram (Chinese)	Instagram (English)	Tamar Talk Facebook
February	44	41	15	49
March	12	14	0	29
April	12	12	1	29
May	18	14	0	40
June	22	14	0	39
July	46	23	9	24
August	17	4	0	28
September	26	10	0	30
October	33	27	0	50
November	4	4	0	38
December	12	3	0	37
<b>Yearly total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>433</b>
<b>Monthly average</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>36.1</b>

The number of videos issued each month in 2023 on *news.gov.hk* social media platforms and Tamar Talk Facebook:

2023	<i>news.gov.hk</i> Facebook	Instagram (Chinese)	Instagram (English)	WeChat	Weibo	YouTube	Tamar Talk Facebook
January	53	8	5	36	36	127	3
February	74	7	2	36	59	177	5
March	45	7	4	29	29	135	4
April	48	8	4	30	41	129	4
May	52	10	5	26	36	134	4
June	51	10	4	18	28	131	5
July	58	10	6	27	40	153	4
August	40	9	5	17	28	148	3
September	67	8	4	27	49	166	5
October	81	8	5	41	62	189	4
November	71	9	5	41	51	167	6
December	70	12	7	37	55	172	9
<b>Yearly total</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>1 828</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Monthly average</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>152.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>

The Information Services Department (ISD) engaged a contractor to produce 56 one-minute videos in 2023 for broadcast on ISD's YouTube channel, the social media platforms of *news.gov.hk* and Tamar Talk Facebook. The total production cost was \$1.21 million.

3) Social media platforms established by the ISD are one of the means to disseminate government information and publicity messages. No specific evaluation indicators are set due to the varied contents, markets and target audiences. We will continue to keep track of the latest market development and global trend, and make use of different social media platforms to disseminate government information and promote government messages.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB136**

**(Question Serial No. 0406)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (3) Public Opinion

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

In this financial year, the Information Services Department (ISD) will expand the inspection of Mainland social media platforms such as Weibo and Xiaohongshu about Hong Kong-related content via computer software by outsourced public opinion monitoring private company and report to the Government. What is the relevant estimated expenditure? How many years will the outsourced inspection of Mainland social media platforms be conducted? What is the manpower incurred by the outsourced contractor? In this connection, will additional manpower be deployed by ISD to handle the matter concerned? If yes, what are the estimated expenditure and establishment?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 58)

Reply:

The Information Services Department (ISD) has been monitoring public opinions expressed on major social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, to help bureaux and departments stay abreast of public sentiments on subjects under their purview and make timely responses and clarifications as appropriate. Hong Kong and the Mainland are closely connected with a growing number of Mainland netizens sharing and discussing government policies and the social situation in Hong Kong. There is a need for the ISD to expand the scope of its public opinion monitoring to cover popular Mainland social media platforms such as Weibo, Xiaohongshu and Douyin, so as to grasp online public opinions in a timely manner.

The ISD utilises outsourced services making use of advanced tools such as big data analytics and computer programmes to monitor social media platforms for discussions relating to the work of the HKSAR Government, with the help of human input for analysis and compilation for enhanced accuracy and reliability. We have put aside around \$2 million for monitoring Mainland social media platforms in the 2024-25 financial year. The department will continue to procure social media monitoring services from the market in light of circumstances with appropriate service period, and the outsourced company will make its own manpower plans according to work requirements.

The ISD has been monitoring media reports and messages posted on major social media platforms at the headquarters level and through Information Officers stationed at various bureaux and departments. This is part of the day-to-day work of our staff and we are not able to single out the exact manpower involved and expenses incurred.

– End –

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB137**

**(Question Serial No. 2803)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The Budget Speech suggests to launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme (SOSEP). Renowned scholars and industry leaders will be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the following:

1. The yearly estimated expenditure of SOSEP;
2. Whether SOSEP can be applied on an individual and group basis; how to define “renowned” and “leaders” and how to prevent abuse of SOSEP; and;
3. Whether emphasis will be put on individual areas such as pillar industries like finance and tourism, etc. in promoting Hong Kong and its many advantages; if yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

Major aspects for promotion include sectors where Hong Kong enjoys clear advantages, such as finance, innovation and technology, trade, legal, shipping, aviation, and intellectual property, etc., under the 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, the Belt and Road Initiative, and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, our world-class talent and infrastructure, culture, and quality education.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB138**

**(Question Serial No. 2350)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 61 of the Budget Speech that the Government will launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme. Renowned scholars and industry leaders will be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the following:

1. When will the Programme commence at the earliest;
2. Whether the sponsored overseas events are limited to academic conferences or a wider range is covered;
3. Whether the sponsor is targeted at local people or Mainland and overseas people are also covered; and
4. The selection criteria for renowned scholars and industry leaders; is there any specific selection process or assessment mechanism?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

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- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HYAB139**

**(Question Serial No. 2830)**

Head: (74) Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services (Fletch CHAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs

Question:

The Government will launch a new Sponsored Overseas Speaking Engagement Programme. Renowned scholars and industry leaders will be sponsored to attend overseas events and give speeches to promote Hong Kong and its many advantages.

1. How will the Programme be implemented; relevant procedures and how to select suitable sponsored events; and
2. Detailed arrangement of the sponsorship and the assessment criteria?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The current-term Government attaches great importance to telling good stories of Hong Kong globally. To step up external promotion of Hong Kong, the Information Services Department (ISD) will launch a new sponsored overseas speaking engagement programme, under which sponsorship will be provided to renowned academics, leaders or experts in their respective industries, sectors or professions to speak at Hong Kong SAR Government-supported events held abroad, such as conferences, forums, summits and receptions. With their professional background and external network, they are expected to act as ambassadors to help promote Hong Kong's strengths and advantages to the world.

These promotion and publicity efforts will generate positive perceptions and coverage of Hong Kong, and bring intangible benefits to the Hong Kong economy.

The above programme will be launched in the financial year of 2024-25. Actual number of sponsored speakers will depend on the invitees' feedback. ISD will allocate manpower to handle the relevant work according to the needs. Relevant expenses incurred by the programme have been included in ISD's estimate for 2024-25 without the need for extra allocation. ISD will closely monitor the implementation of the programme and review its effectiveness regularly to enhance the promotion and publicity impacts.

- End -