Question: The Information Services Department noted that the number of visiting journalists and film crews assisted in 2008 was substantially increased to 615 because of a large number of overseas/Mainland media corps who came to cover the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events. However, the estimated number for 2009 is 265. Since the East Asian Games will be held in Hong Kong in 2009 and it is anticipated that media from at least nine countries will come to the territory to cover the event, what are the reasons for estimating the figure at 265, which is even lower than 291 for 2007.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Tanya

Reply:

Nearly 300 journalists visited Hong Kong in 2007 (which marked the 10th anniversary of Hong Kong’s reunification with the Mainland) to report on Hong Kong and to cover the celebration events. The number of visiting journalists in 2007 more than doubled that in an ordinary year (around 130).

For 2008, over 600 overseas and Mainland journalists visited Hong Kong to cover the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events with 42 and 28 countries/regions respectively competing.

As for 2009, nine countries/regions will compete in the East Asian Games (EAG) to be held in December. Given the smaller number of competing countries/regions, we expect that the overseas and Mainland journalists visiting Hong Kong to cover the EAG will be fewer than those in 2007 and 2008, but will still be more than those in an ordinary year.

Signature

Name in block letters Mrs Betty FUNG

Post Title Director of Information Services

Date 18.3.2009
The Information Services Department noted that the staging of the 2009 East Asian Games in December 2009 will provide an excellent opportunity to promote Hong Kong’s credentials as one of Asia’s major sporting event locations. What are the details of the publicity programmes and expenditure involved?

Answer:

The Information Services Department (ISD) works closely with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), the 2009 East Asian Games (Hong Kong) Limited and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs) in the Mainland and overseas to promote the 2009 East Asian Games (EAG) through a variety of publicity programmes. We will promote the city as one of Asia’s major sporting event locations through different channels, including broadcast of promotional videos and a theme song; placement of supplements in media, leaflets, press releases, exhibitions and other promotional activities as well as sponsoring journalists to visit Hong Kong.

The expenditure for promoting EAG will be largely funded by LCSD. Expenditure incurred by ISD and the ETOs in supporting the publicity activities will be met by their respective existing resources. In 2009-10, ISD will allocate about $3 million for promotion of EAG outside Hong Kong. This is on top of what ISD will spend on promoting EAG locally and that to be spent by other departments and agencies on EAG publicity.
Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Head: 74 – Information Services Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Publishing

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

For the financial year 2009-10, what are the estimated numbers of annual reports to be published by various government departments, the estimated quantity of paper required and the expenditure involved? If these figures are not readily available, please compile the statistics as soon as possible.

Is there any plan to reduce the expenditure and the quantity of paper involved in this respect? Will consideration be given to publishing the annual reports on the Internet or in the format of CD-ROMs?

Asked by: Hon. TSE Wai-chun, Paul

Reply:

In line with the e-Government policy, government bureaux and departments are reminded regularly to produce electronic version of annual departmental reports instead of hard copies. In 2009-10, less than 30% of all government bureaux/departments/agencies will produce print annual reports, while others will produce electronic reports for uploading onto departmental websites and/or CD-ROMs only.

For the departments/agencies which will print annual reports in 2009-10, it is estimated that about 31,000 copies will be printed. The number of pages of the annual departmental reports ranges from 40 to 160 pages; and the estimated printing cost ranges from $4,000 to $500,000 for each department. The cost will be absorbed by the individual departments.

We will continue to encourage departments to produce electronic copies as far as practicable.

Signature ____________________________
Name in block letters Mrs Betty FUNG
Post Title Director of Information Services
Date 18.3.2009
Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

CONTROLLING OFFICER’S REPLY TO INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Head: 74 – Information Services Department  Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Public Relations Outside Hong Kong

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 71 of the Budget Speech that the updated Brand Hong Kong will be promoted. What are the details and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Ting-kwong

Reply:

In the 2007-08 Policy Address, the Chief Executive invited the Financial Secretary to formulate strategies to revitalise Brand Hong Kong (BrandHK) and to step up publicity efforts highlighting Hong Kong as Asia’s world city. To this end, the Information Services Department initiated a review of BrandHK last year. Through public opinion surveys, consultation sessions, focus group discussions, a dedicated website and various public engagement programmes, we have reached out to various sectors and the general community to tap their views and aspirations on the core values of BrandHK and the city’s future competitive positioning.

We are now collating and analysing the views collected through various channels with a view to incorporating new elements into BrandHK and revising the marketing strategy. We expect to complete the exercise by the end of 2009. We plan to promote the updated BrandHK and Hong Kong’s image as a world city to the international and Mainland audience during the World Exposition 2010 Shanghai China.

As regards expenditure, we have spent about $3.3 million on engaging professional services in, among others, conducting public opinion surveys, setting up a dedicated website and conducting various public engagement programmes.

Signature

Name in block letters  Mrs Betty FUNG

Post Title  Director of Information Services

Date  18.3.2009
Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10

CONTROLING OFFICER’S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Head: 74 – Information Services Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (5) Publishing

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

What is the amount of public money involved in producing a budget consultation comic book for the 2009-10 Budget? To my knowledge, members of the public who have read it gave adverse comments on it. How does the Financial Secretary assess the cost effectiveness of publishing the comic book?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yuk-man

Reply:

To enhance young people’s understanding and participation in the budget process, the Financial Secretary adopted new and creative measures for the 2009-10 Budget consultation. These include a comic book “Tomorrow – Future for Today”.

The comic book was produced by a renowned local cartoonist, with the key message that “future success is built on today’s decisions”. A total of 30 000 copies were produced at the cost of $337,000 (including design, illustration, printing and delivery costs) and distributed primarily at secondary schools.

By the Budget Day in 2009, the Financial Secretary’s Office has received some 6 750 submissions on the Budget, as compared to 1 005 submissions received in 2008. The nearly six-fold increase in submissions received indicates that the new and creative approach adopted this year has helped generate greater public interest and response in the budget consultation process.

Signature

Name in block letters ____________________________

Mrs Betty FUNG

Post Title ____________________________

Director of Information Services

Date ____________________________

18.3.2009
Head: 74 – Information Services Department  
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Local Public Relations and Public Information

Controlling Officer: Director of Information Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

The Financial Secretary has produced a set of Announcements in the Public Interest calling on the public to give their views on the 2009-10 Budget. How much public money has been spent on this?

 Asked by: Hon. WONG Yuk-man

Reply:

As with previous years, the Financial Secretary launched a public consultation exercise to solicit the community’s views on the 2009-10 Budget. For this purpose, the Government has commissioned the production of a set of TV and Radio Announcements in the Public Interest at the cost of $400,000. The expenditure is on par with that spent in previous years on budget consultation publicity.

Signature

Name in block letters: Mrs Betty FUNG

Post Title: Director of Information Services

Date: 18.3.2009
The media always quote from “informed sources” of the Government. Will the Government inform whether public money has been involved when “informed sources” disclose information to the media? If yes, what were the amount involved, the approving authority and the criteria of approval?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yuk-man

Reply:

We note that “informed sources” are quoted in media reports from time to time. However, such “informed sources” are never identified as the media always uphold their professional ethics of protecting sources and refraining from disclosing their identities. It is therefore not possible to ascertain the identity of “informed sources”. As far as Information Services Department is concerned, no government expenditure is incurred in this regard.

Signature  __________________________
Name in block letters  Mrs Betty FUNG
Post Title  Director of Information Services
Date  18.3.2009