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Replies to supplementary questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Session No. : 18

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-CEDB01

(Question Serial No. S077)

Head: (152) Government Secretariat: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Commerce and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Ms Maggie WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Further to Reply Serial No. CEDB002 –

1. Please advise on the progress of striving for Hong Kong's accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Amid the tariff war, are there any plans to expedite the commencement of the work on strengthening international exchanges and deepening regional ties and co-operation? In this connection, what is the estimated amount of resources to be allocated and will a designated team be formed to handle the work?
2. Our country is the world's second-largest economy and second-largest consumer goods market. Amid the tariff war, what are the future plans to assist small and medium enterprises in exploring consumer markets having a connection with the Mainland through the "GoGBA one-stop platform" and "GoGBA Business Support Centres"?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie

Reply:

In the face of changing geopolitical and trade landscapes, as well as the global impact of unilateralism and protectionism, upholding the multilateral trading system and promoting regional economic cooperation have become increasingly important. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)^{Note}, as the world's largest free trade agreement, can help demonstrate to the world the value that regional economic cooperation can bring to various economies.

As a founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Hong Kong, China (HKC) remains firmly committed to the rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core. At the same time, HKC actively participates in and supports the work of regional

economic cooperation (such as that of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation). Besides, Hong Kong is the world's freest economy. According to the Economic Freedom of the World 2024 Annual Report published by the Fraser Institute, Hong Kong was also ranked top in the assessment area of "Freedom to trade internationally". We hope to seek early accession to RCEP and contribute to the promotion of regional economic integration.

Upon the entry into force of RCEP on 1 January 2022, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has immediately submitted Hong Kong's formal accession request, and actively expressed to its members at different levels and on different occasions Hong Kong's keen interest in joining RCEP early. Seeking accession to RCEP is one of the key priorities of the HKSAR Government. Besides receiving full support from the Central People's Government, the HKSAR Government has also received positive responses from other RCEP members in particular the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states.

The Procedures for Accession to the RCEP Agreement was adopted by the RCEP Joint Committee (RJC) in September 2024, which is a concrete and critical step to welcoming new members. The HKSAR Government will continue to proactively follow up with RJC and maintain close liaison with the trade and economic departments of RCEP members to promote relevant discussions and foster favourable conditions for the early accession of Hong Kong to RCEP, with the view to contributing to the promotion of regional economic integration.

The HKSAR Government has formulated a comprehensive, specific and proactive work plan to strive for Hong Kong's accession to RCEP. However, as it involves the engagement with other governments, the HKSAR Government has no plan to disclose to the public the internal work plan as well as the relevant discussion with other economies.

The relevant work is led by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, and supported by the Trade and Industry Department and relevant overseas Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices. It is conducted with the existing manpower and is part of the regular duties. The expenditure has been subsumed under the overall estimate and cannot be quantified separately.

On market development, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) will continue to organise various activities and provide support services and the latest policy updates as well as economic and trade information about the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) market through the "GoGBA one-stop platform" (the Platform) and the network of "GoGBA Business Support Centres" which already covers all 9 Mainland cities (Qianhai and Futian (Shenzhen), Nansha (Guangzhou), Zhuhai, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Foshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing and Huizhou). The Platform's GoGBA website and mobile app also provide business policy and practical information online about the GBA to help small and medium enterprises (SMEs) explore the Mainland domestic market.

In 2025-26, apart from setting up a new "GoGBA Business Support Centre" in Macao, the HKTDC will:

- launch "GoGBA Coffee & Chat" to provide a series of interactive small group consultation sessions targeting specific practical issues, and invite experts to provide SMEs with in-depth analyses on and practical guidance in doing business in the GBA;

- organise a GoGBA mission to Dongguan to help SMEs in the manufacturing sector understand the latest situation of how Mainland enterprises maintain their competitiveness through the use of innovative technologies; and
- help SMEs grasp business opportunities in the Mainland market through other services such as organising a “Fashion Go Places” mission to Guangzhou and Dongguan to assist the fashion industry in expanding business network, and implementing “E-Commerce Express” to strengthen support for SMEs to tap into the Mainland market through electronic commerce.

Note: RCEP member economies include Mainland China, the 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), Australia, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-CEDB02

(Question Serial No. S078)

Head: (152) Government Secretariat: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Commerce and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Ms Maggie WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

- 1) Does the Working Group on Promoting Silver Economy currently have any plans and key performance indicators?
- 2) The silver economy is one of the important consumer markets in the future. How will the Government assist small and medium enterprises in developing this market?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie

Reply:

The requested information is set out below:

- (1) For the five areas of silver economy (i.e. boosting “silver consumption”, developing the “silver industry”, promoting “quality assurance of silver products”, enhancing “silver financial and security arrangements” and unleashing “silver productivity”), the Working Group on Promoting Silver Economy (the Working Group) is proactively formulating work plans and implementation details. The Working Group will report work progress to the Chief Executive in early 2025-26, then brief the relevant Panel of the Legislative Council in good time and coordinate respective bureaux’ implementation of various measures as soon as possible.
- (2) In terms of boosting “silver consumption”, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB) is proactively encouraging the business sector and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to give prominence to silver elements in their business operation (including more exhibitions), and to offer to the market more products and services that better meet silver consumers’ needs. This aims to provide the silver community with a wide array of choices, thereby promoting the development of the silver economy.

In the area of developing the “silver industry”, Innovation, Technology and Industry

Bureau will promote marketisation and industrialisation of products catering to the elderly and support product provision and market expansion by the business sector. Directions of relevant measures include facilitating industries and SMEs to explore business opportunities and supporting the development of the gerontechnology start-up ecosystem.

In the area of promoting “quality assurance of silver products”, the Governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have been dedicated to formulating Greater Bay Area (GBA) Standards for different products and services, with a view to promoting the interconnectivity and integrated development of the three places. The CEDB will drive the development of GBA Standards, with a view to assisting the trade and SMEs to enhance relevant product quality and expand sales network to Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao for the benefit of silver consumers at large.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-CEDB03

(Question Serial No. S079)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Public Affairs and General Television Programme

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

- 1) Is there any plan to effectively carry out the publicity work of the 15th National Games through Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) at present? What are the amount of resources and number of staff to be allocated for the purpose respectively?
- 2) According to the reply, RTHK will conduct school and community tours to promote various programmes. What is the specific plan for promotion through school and community tours? And what is the amount of resources and manpower to be allocated?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie

Reply:

Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) will promote, produce programme and live broadcast the 15th National Games (NG), and the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games (NGD and NSOG) to be held in November and December 2025. RTHK will promote the competitions through various platforms (including TV channels 31, 32 and popup 36, as well as radio channels, website, social media and mobile applications). In 2025-26, RTHK estimates that the promotion, programme production and live broadcast of the NG, NGD and NSOG will involve a total spending of around \$153 million. The relevant expenses and additional manpower involved for individual item will depend on the actual work arrangement and hence there is no concrete figure at the moment.

To foster young people's patriotism and promote their understanding of our country, RTHK will promote its programmes among schools and local communities, such as partnering with primary schools to look for young actors for filming "Learning Basic Law with Good Neighbours" to promote the Basic Law in the form of light-hearted dramas, and conducting school tours during January to February 2025 to promote the Basic Law in different primary schools; inviting youth groups from different sectors and members of the public through the District Youth Development and Civic Education Committees and the Community Involvement, Culture and Recreation Committees in the 18 districts, as well as various local

Chinese history and culture societies to participate in “Basic Law and Patriotic Education Quiz” competitions on Chinese knowledge; and partnering with secondary schools to select junior secondary students for “The Young Cultural Ambassadors” to serve as docents and design local tour itineraries to understand our country’s history and culture. RTHK will carry out the above work with existing resources and manpower.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SV-CEDB01

(Question Serial No. SV049)

Head: (152) Government Secretariat: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (-) -

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Ms Maggie WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 48 of the Budget that the Government is exploring a set of streamlined procedures for vetting licence applications for operating Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites, and will complete the relevant work within 2025. Please provide information on the main scope of the study and whether the Government will discuss and study with the relevant Mainland authorities to introduce more policies to facilitate the operation of LEO satellites.

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy

Reply:

Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites are the new trend in satellite development globally. Compared with traditional satellites (i.e. geostationary orbit satellites), LEO satellites are less costly and have the characteristics of low latency and high transmission rates. They are widely applicable in domains such as telecommunications, remote monitoring, navigation, tracking, satellite Internet access, etc., providing services in the areas of transport and logistics, and smart city. According to the existing statutory requirements in Hong Kong, satellite operators need to obtain the Outer Space Licence issued by the Chief Executive (CE) under the Outer Space Ordinance (Cap. 523) and the Space Station Carrier Licence issued by the Communications Authority under the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106) for each satellite operated in Hong Kong (regardless of whether the satellite is launched in Hong Kong).

Since LEO satellites are operated in a constellation that may include tens or hundreds of LEO satellites, operators are required to apply for the corresponding number of Outer Space Licences and Space Station Carrier Licences in accordance with the number of satellites under the current licensing regime. To enhance Hong Kong's attractiveness and competitiveness in the development of LEO satellites, the CE announced in the 2024 Policy Address and the Financial Secretary announced in the 2025-26 Budget that the Government will conduct a

study on streamlining the vetting procedures of licence applications for operating LEO satellites, with an aim to completing the relevant study within 2025.

The Government expects that the streamlined satellite licensing regime will attract satellite operators to operate LEO satellites in Hong Kong, which will in turn attract investment from relevant enterprises and promote innovative technology and high-quality industry development. At the same time, it will also provide relevant training and employment opportunities to attract more talents in satellite network operation to develop in Hong Kong, thereby consolidating Hong Kong's position as a regional telecommunications hub.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SV-CEDB02

(Question Serial No. SV047)

Head: (152) Government Secretariat: Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Commerce and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Ms Maggie WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

On the support for Hong Kong businesses to expand into the Mainland consumer and domestic markets, please clarify whether there will be any Mainland consumption trend studies for offering Hong Kong enterprises products and services corresponding to the supply and demand of the Mainland market. Please also provide the plans on developing and strengthening liaison and cooperation with the various levels of Mainland authorities for expanding Hong Kong businesses' distribution channels in the Mainland.

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin

Reply:

To support Hong Kong enterprises to develop the Mainland consumption and domestic market, Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) regularly publishes research reports and articles on Mainland consumption trends, including a series of research articles on "Central China's Consumer Market" and "Hainan's Free Trade Port: Duty-Free Supplier Opportunities" in 2024-25. These studies show that the consumer markets in the relevant regions are upgrading, with diverse and characteristic demands for various products, offering significant opportunities for Hong Kong enterprises.

The Government will continue to help Hong Kong enterprises expand sales channels through different means. Among others, HKTDC will continue to actively participate in major exhibitions on the Mainland, such as the annual China International Consumer Products Expo in Haikou and the China International Import Expo in Shanghai, and organise Hong Kong enterprises' participation for promoting quality Hong Kong products and services to Mainland buyers and consumers.

Besides, the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau will continue to coordinate and formulate policies and measures to encourage enterprises to develop the Mainland electronic commerce (e-commerce) market, including:

- encouraging small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to implement e-commerce projects on the Mainland through “E-commerce Easy” under the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading and Domestic Sales;
- implementing the “E-Commerce Express” through HKTDC to address the pain points encountered by Hong Kong enterprises when developing cross-border e-commerce on the Mainland by, in collaboration with large scale e-commerce or social media platforms, conducting a series of thematic training seminars and research sharing sessions to cover practical topics including the Mainland and overseas e-commerce market landscapes, legal compliance, operational strategies and features of both traditional and emerging online shopping platforms, how to establish fanbase, livestreaming production techniques, etc., with a view to providing more comprehensive support for SMEs interested in tapping into the e-commerce market;
- organising the 2nd edition of the Hong Kong Shopping Festival (HKSF) through HKTDC in August 2025, bringing together Hong Kong enterprises to offer discounts in Mainland online stores and arranging enterprises to conduct livestreaming promotion on Mainland e-commerce platforms, with a view to assisting Hong Kong enterprises in developing e-commerce businesses on the Mainland. HKTDC will also, under the “E-Commerce Express”, provide one-on-one consultation services for HKSF participants. Marketing specialists will advise Hong Kong enterprises on appropriate e-commerce strategies based on their individual business needs and product features;
- continuing the work of the Support and Consultation Centre for SMEs under the Trade and Industry Department (TID) in leading and cooperating with the other three SME centres (including the “SME Centre” under HKTDC, the “SME One” under the Hong Kong Productivity Council and the “TecOne” under the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation) to strengthen the provision of information to SMEs on e-commerce; and
- enhancing support for SMEs to develop brands and expand the e-commerce sales networks through organising a mentorship programme by TID.

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SV-CEDB03

(Question Serial No. SV048)

Head: (160) Radio Television Hong Kong

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Public Affairs and General Television Programme

Controlling Officer: Director of Broadcasting (Angelina KWAN)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

Please provide information and make a comparison of the production costs of television (TV) programmes between Phoenix Hong Kong Channel (domestic free TV channel 85) and Radio Television Hong Kong.

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-yee, Regina

Reply:

As a public broadcaster, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)'s programme production has to cater for the needs of different groups in the society, including the mass audience as well as the minority groups such as ethnic minorities and non-Chinese speaking group. Besides, programmes produced by RTHK cover various aspects including news, public affairs, government information, national education, sports, culture, lifestyle and education programmes, etc. To engender a sense of citizenship and national identity, RTHK is committed to strengthening partnership with different Mainland broadcasters and co-producing television programmes that foster the affection for our country. RTHK has established cooperation with the China Media Group, Beijing Radio & Television Station, Shanghai Media Group, Yunnan Television, Guangdong Radio and Television and Guangzhou Broadcasting Network, etc. Besides, the 3 digital terrestrial television channels operated by RTHK relay programmes of China Central Television and China Global Television Network, enabling the public to watch more programmes with a national perspective. RTHK also produces different types of programmes on various themes, proactively assists in strengthening the dissemination of government information and telling the good stories of our country and Hong Kong.

RTHK will promote, produce programmes and live broadcast the 15th National Games (NG) and the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympics (NGD and NSOG) to be held in November and December 2025; cover the competitions of the NG, NGD and NSOG in an all-round manner through its TV channels, RTHK website and mobile applications, and produce relevant programmes to enhance

public's awareness and interest in these 2 mega sports events. The increase of \$291.3 million (23.1%) in RTHK's estimate for 2025-26 as compared with the revised estimate for 2024-25 is mainly for the programme production, promotion and live broadcast of the NG, NGD and NSOG.

The Annual Report of Phoenix Media Investment (Holdings) Limited does not contain the breakdown of programme production cost of different businesses under its group (including Phoenix Hong Kong Channel).

Given the nature and mode of operation of RTHK and Phoenix Hong Kong Channel are different, it may not be suitable for direct comparison. Nonetheless, RTHK will timely review its programme production direction, comprehensively review its staffing and operation, and introduce appropriate measures including streamlining its structure and utilising technology for more effective use of public resources without affecting the quality of RTHK's programmes and services.

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