Following is a question by the Hon Paul Tse and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (May 6):

Question:

Will the Government inform this Council:

(a) of the total expenditure on the production and printing of annual reports of various government departments, as well as the 10 government departments with the highest relevant expenditure and the respective amounts, in each of the past three years;

(b) of the procedure for vetting and approving the aforesaid expenditure; whether there is any mechanism currently in place to regulate the aforesaid annual expenditure incurred by various government departments; if so, of the details of the mechanism; if not, whether it will set up such a mechanism expeditiously; and

(c) whether last year, it had studied the adoption of greener methods to publish annual reports; if it had, of the details; if not, whether it will conduct such a study expeditiously?

Reply:

President,

The total expenditure incurred by government departments in the production and printing of departmental annual reports in 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09 was $5,209,734; $5,192,131 and $4,952,609 respectively. In this regard, the top 10 government departments and the expenditure involved in the past three years are set out in the Annex.

Some departments are required by law to produce and publish departmental annual reports. For others, heads of department will decide whether or not annual reports for their respective departments should be produced and printed. The cost will
be borne by the individual departments following their established procedures for approval of funding.

The Director of Administration issued a circular in 2003 suggesting government departments to publish their annual reports on the Internet or using CD-ROMs, thereby minimising the printing of hard copies and the use of paper. Annual reminders are sent to bureaux and departments.

Ends/Wednesday, May 6, 2009
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