

Press release

LCQ18: Statistical surveys conducted by the Census and Statistics Department

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Following is a question by Dr Hon David Li Kwok-po and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, in the Legislative Council today (April 14):

Question:

It has been learnt that the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) makes changes to the types of data it collects in its statistical surveys for publication from time to time, and that C&SD has established channels to obtain views from data users, including conducting customer opinion surveys and holding regular meetings with major statistical data users, so as to assist it in determining the types of data to be collected and published. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) of the number of regular meetings held with major statistical data users in each of the past five years, broken down by major subject of the meetings;
- (b) of the subject headings introduced and suspended respectively in the statistical surveys C&SD had conducted in each of the past five years in response to data users' views;
- (c) of the total number of subjects added to and deleted from the "Hong Kong statistics" in each of the past five years; and
- (d) whether there are objective criteria adopted by C&SD to consider which particular statistics are to be introduced or suspended; if so, of the details of such criteria?

Reply:

President,

(a) The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) holds regular meetings with representatives of major local data users in order to keep abreast of their changing and emerging needs in developing the department's various statistical programmes. The number of regular meetings held by major subject areas in each of the past five years is summarised in Annex 1.

Apart from the above regular meetings, C&SD holds consultation meetings with relevant stakeholders as and when necessary to seek their views on specific statistical projects such as Population Census/By-census, Household Expenditure Survey and Annual Earnings and Hours Survey.

(b) C&SD has introduced the new subject areas for collection of statistics in each of the past five years (as in Annex 2) after considering data users' views.

C&SD has not received any feedback from the data users requesting that compilation of certain statistics be suspended in the past five years.

(c) In the past five years, C&SD has added a total of 13 new subject areas for collection of statistics, including the 10 subject areas set out in part (b) above. The breakdown of the number of new subject areas added in each of the past five years is given below -

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of new subject areas added for collection of statistics	2	1	4	3	3

There was no deletion of subject areas by C&SD from its statistical work in the past five years. But in order to make the best use of resources, for statistics of diminishing importance, C&SD has taken steps to reduce the scale of data collection or to suspend data collection in certain subject areas (such as for which administrative data are considered as good proxy) so that resources can be redeployed to other statistical areas of growing importance.

(d) C&SD assesses the needs and the merits for the introduction or suspension of particular statistics on a case-by-case basis having regard to individual circumstances. In general, C&SD will consider factors including data users' needs, relevance to the latest economic and social developments of the Hong Kong economy, Government's policy priorities, practicability of collecting reliable data on the statistics concerned, resources implications, responding burden of sampled establishments and households, and recommendations or requirements of international statistical organisations.

Ends