

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****FSTB(FS)165****(Question Serial No. 3128)**Head: (26) Census and Statistics DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expensesProgramme: (2) Social StatisticsControlling Officer: Commissioner for Census and Statistics (Leo YU)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the TreasuryQuestion:

According to the programme, the provision for 2025-26 is \$54.6 million (30.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25, mainly due to the additional provision for the operating expenses for conducting the 26C. Please provide the following information:

1. A breakdown of the manpower and expenditure required for 21C and 26C; and
2. The estimated expenditure for the application of innovative technology.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)Reply:

- (1) The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) will implement a series of re-engineering initiatives for the 2026 Population Census, including an extension of the data collection period from 1.5 months to 1 year to help mitigate the possible operational risks arising from the need to complete the entire project within a very short time span. Despite an extended data collection period, C&SD will deploy a much smaller, better-trained and more efficient team of interviewers for collecting high quality data in the 2026 Population Census. Therefore, C&SD will only need to employ about 200 non-civil service contract (NCSC) Survey Interviewers for the data collection work, instead of hiring thousands of Temporary Field Workers as in the 2021 Population Census.

The total number of posts for the entire projects of the 2026 Population Census and the 2021 Population Census are given below:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>2026 Population Census (Estimated no. of posts)</b>	<b>2021 Population Census (No. of actual posts)</b>
Statistician	6	8
Statistical Officer	41	45
Census and Survey Officer [square brackets denote the number of NCSC Survey Interviewer]	230 [200]	207 [125]

<b>Grade</b>	<b>2026 Population Census (Estimated no. of posts)</b>	<b>2021 Population Census (No. of actual posts)</b>
Temporary Field Worker	0	7 034
Executive Officer; Clerical Officer; Information Technology and other Supporting Staff	24	44
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>7 338</b>

In terms of manpower and operating expenses, the expenditure items for the 2026 Population Census and the 2021 Population Census are given below:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Estimated expenditure for the 2026 Population Census (\$ million)</b>	<b>Actual expenditure for the 2021 Population Census (\$ million) (calculated at 2023/24 prices)</b>
Personal emoluments (including contract staff cost)	270.4	279.9
Honorarium for Temporary Field Workers	-	113.6
Other operating expenses (mainly for procurement of necessary stores and services, implementation of publicity activities, production and posting of mails and administration expenses)	59.5	114.0
Office rent and rates	36.4	41.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>366.2</b>	<b>548.6</b>

Note: Figures may not add up to the total due to rounding.

- (2) C&SD has been applying innovative technology continually to improve operational efficiency and data quality, and will introduce a number of machine learning models in the 2026 Population Census for automatic coding of textual data on industry and occupation, automatic processing of aerial photos to enumerate marine population, and deploying address matching models for using government administrative data in census results. C&SD will also adopt the Consented Data Exchange Gateway of the Government for secure exchange of administrative data with other B/Ds.

C&SD does not maintain breakdown of expenditure figures for the application of innovative technology.

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