

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2826)**

Head: (26) Census and Statistics Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (4) General Statistical Services

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Census and Statistics (Leo YU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury

Question:

The provision under this programme represents an increase of \$9.5 million (21.3%) over the revised estimate for 2025-26, mainly due to an increase in operating expenses to support the expansion of data science consulting and analysis services to various bureaux and departments. In this regard, please inform the Council:

1. What are the details of the proposed expansion of data science consulting and analysis services? How will the additional \$9.5 million provision be distributed?
2. Will the proposed expansion of services involve the collection of data required for the adoption of AI technologies? How will the Census and Statistics Department coordinate with the work of the "AI Efficacy Enhancement Team"?
3. Will any performance indicators be set (for example, the expected number of data science consulting and analysis services to be provided each year)?
4. The establishment of the Census and Statistics Department is expected to see a net reduction of 27 posts in 2026-27. Does the Census and Statistics Department have sufficient manpower to expand the data science consulting and analysis services?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

- (1) The data science advisory and analysis services provided by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) aim to assist bureaux and departments in leveraging data to gain a deeper understanding of their operational pain points. Specific tasks include data pre-processing, integration, mining, model development and analysis, etc. In order to expand the services to more bureaux and departments, C&SD will set aside \$10 million in 2026-27 to engage contract staff (about \$5.7 million) and procure necessary information technology equipment and related services (about \$4.3 million), with a view to strengthening its capacity to support data analysis.

- (2) Whether the services would involve data collection by artificial intelligence (AI) technologies is dependent on such relevant factors as specific content and requirements of individual projects, mechanism of data collection, etc.

The AI Efficacy Enhancement Team (AIEET) is a high-level setup led by the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration to review, from a macro and policy perspective, the application of artificial intelligence (AI) technology and business processes across various bureaux and departments while fostering cross-departmental data sharing, so as to enhance the efficiency of government operations and services as a whole. The Commissioner for Census and Statistics is a member of AIEET, providing data science support, assisting AIEET in co-ordinating and steering government departments to apply AI, re-engineering workflow and enhancing efficiency. C&SD's data science services focus more on applying data analysis methods to solve business problems, and the outcomes do not necessarily involve the deployment of AI solutions. The two streams of work are complementary in nature.

- (3) It is expected that in 2026-27, C&SD will be able to simultaneously handle approximately 5 projects with in-depth participation (i.e. performing specific technical work for client departments) and provide advisory services for around 10 departments (i.e. offering recommendations or feasibility assessments). However, the actual number of projects that can be completed will vary depending on various factors, such as the service needs of bureaux and departments, the specific requirements and complexity of individual projects, etc.
- (4) The posts to be deleted by C&SD in 2026-27 do not involve data science advisory and analysis services, hence the relevant services will not be affected, not to mention the availability of additional resources.

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