

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**DEVB(PL)410**

**(Question Serial No. 5281)**

Head: (91) Lands Department  
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses  
Programme: (-) Not Specified  
Controlling Officer: Director of Lands (Ms. Bernadette LINN)  
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question (Member Question No. 57):

What is the 2014-15 estimate for the Lands Department's duty visits to and exchanges with the Mainland? Please provide the themes of such duty visits and exchanges planned for 2014-15. How will the Administration prevent activities irrelevant to official duties from taking place during duty visits outside Hong Kong? And how will the Administration prevent applications for revising the visit destinations from becoming a mere formality?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yuk-man

Reply:

Officers of the Lands Department will conduct duty visits to the Mainland in 2014-15 with regard to operational needs, to promote regional exchange and cooperation with the Mainland. There are no specific plans for the time being.

Duty visits, if publicly funded, are subject to control under relevant regulations and guidelines to ensure effective monitoring and proper use of public funds. There is control on aspects, such as duty visits should only be conducted when there are strong operational reasons; all duty visits should obtain prior approval formally and should avoid non-official activities; the officers concerned should provide all necessary information in respect of the proposed visit as far as possible when submitting the application; if there are any subsequent changes to the arrangements, the officers concerned should inform the approving officers as soon as possible who should then assess whether re-consideration of the applications is needed.