

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB238

(Question Serial No. 3285)

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (LAM Kwok-leung)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Regarding the provision of sign language interpretation services in the past 5 years, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Whether sign language interpretation services or other supporting services were provided to (i) the deaf persons in custody (PICs) and/or hearing impaired PICs, (ii) deaf visitors and/or hearing impaired visitors; if yes, the frequency, occasions and causes for providing sign language interpretation services in each year;
2. In connection with the above, the number of sign language interpreters involved in each year, their pay and the organisations to which they belong and the total expenditure involved in each year; and
3. Whether the Government will consider allocating more resources to improve the services for communicating with the deaf PICs and/or hearing impaired PICs in future. If yes, what are the details (including measures, manpower and expenditure involved and timetable, etc.)? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 57)

Reply:

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) is committed to ensuring a secure, safe, humane, decent and healthy custodial environment. There are guidelines for handling cases involving persons in custody (PICs) with disabilities. CSD organises sign language courses in collaboration with non-profit organisations to enhance frontline correctional officers' communication skills with and understanding of persons with hearing impairment. In addition, the Department will, having regard to the circumstances of individual PICs with hearing impairment, engage sign language interpreters listed in the register of part-time interpreters maintained by the Judiciary, or seek assistance from non-governmental organisations to arrange sign language interpretation services for those persons in need. CSD does not maintain a breakdown of the occasions and causes for providing sign language interpretation services.

In the past 5 years, the numbers of cases of sign language interpretation services provided by sign language interpreters listed in the register of part-time interpreters maintained by the Judiciary and the actual expenditures involved are listed below:

Year	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (as at 28.2.2018)
Number of cases of sign language interpretation services	14	46	9	9	7
Actual expenditure on sign language interpretation services (\$'000)	7	30	6	7	5

As the management of PICs with hearing impairment is part of the daily management work of CSD, the Department does not maintain a breakdown of the staff establishment and the expenditure involved. In the coming year, CSD will continue to organise sign language courses to enhance relevant training for staff.

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