

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB311

(Question Serial No. 3238)

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Prison Management

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (WOO Ying-ming)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Please list in tabular form:

- (1) the annual expenditures on meals and the average meal expenses per year per person in custody (PIC) in various correctional institutions in the past 3 years.
- (2) the numbers of complaints lodged by PICs in various correctional institutions about dietary matters in the past 3 years.

According to some PICs, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) only allows Buddhists to choose vegetarian food. If PICs need to go vegetarian due to living habits, they are not allowed to have vegetarian meal. The criteria adopted are unreasonable. In this regard, would CSD explain the criteria for dietary choice, and why living habits are not regarded as justifiable reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chi-chuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 59)

Reply:

- (1) The actual expenditures on "Provisions for institutions" of the Correctional Services Department (CSD) in the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Actual expenditure on "Provisions for institutions" (\$ million)	78.00	78.83	73.73

The average cost of food material per day per person in custody (PIC) in the past 3 years was about \$24.6.

- (2) The numbers of complaints about meal arrangements lodged by PICs in the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	2017	2018	2019
No. of complaints about meal arrangements*	96	93	109

*mainly about food quality and assignment of dietary scale

In accordance with Section 24A of the Prisons Ordinance (Cap. 234), CSD provides PICs with plain and wholesome food. The various dietary scales currently provided by CSD are designed by dietitians and approved by the Department of Health. The scales meet the nutritional needs of PICs. Having regard to the health, dietary and religious needs of PICs, CSD currently provides 4 main dietary scales, namely local staple rice diet (Dietary Scale 1), diet of curries and chapatti (Dietary Scale 2), diet of bread and potatoes (Dietary Scale 3) and vegetarian diet (Dietary Scale 4). Besides, CSD will provide suitable food to individual PICs on the grounds of medical considerations, taking into account the advice of medical officers.

PICs may make a request for change of Dietary Scale, and the management of the institution concerned will consider the justifications provided on a case-by-case basis with due regard to their health, dietary and religious needs.

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