

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB313

(Question Serial No. 2572)

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (125) Workshop Services

Programme: (2) Re-integration

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

a. What department is currently responsible for transporting the masks produced by the Correctional Services Department (CSD) to the Government Logistics Department (GLD), and from GLD to various government departments? How does the Government ensure safe and secure transport of masks to prevent the masks from being left unattended during the transportation process, which will give chances to thieves or even lead to misappropriation by the transport staff?

b. Please provide a list of the government departments to which CSD-manufactured masks were supplied, and the number of masks supplied to each of those departments each day and each year in the past 5 years. What are the specific screening criteria adopted by CSD for supplying masks to government departments, and are there any fees charged? If yes, please set out the fee items and the amounts charged.

c. Has CSD signed any agreement with other government departments to regulate the use of masks, and how does CSD conduct monitoring to ensure no breaches of the agreement by the government departments? How does the Government prevent the misappropriation of CSD-manufactured masks by the staff of various government departments for private use or even for resale in the market? Will it be a breach of the Civil Service Regulations and/or the laws of Hong Kong if a civil servant is found to have misappropriated CSD-manufactured masks or resold them for profits, and how would the Government follow up to deter such acts?

d. Please provide a list of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to which CSD-manufactured masks were supplied, and the number of masks supplied to each of those NGOs each day and each year in the past 5 years. What are the specific screening criteria adopted by CSD for supplying masks to NGOs, and are there any fees charged? If yes, please set out the fee items and the amounts charged.

e. Has CSD signed any agreement with NGOs to regulate the use of masks and specify the recipients of the masks? How does CSD conduct monitoring to ensure no breaches of the agreement by the NGOs? How does the Government prevent the misappropriation of

CSD-manufactured masks by the staff of the NGOs for private use or even for resale in the market? Will it be a breach of the laws of Hong Kong if an NGO staff member is found to have misappropriated CSD-manufactured masks or resold them for profits, and how would the Government follow up to deter such acts?

f. Do government departments supplied with CSD-manufactured masks conduct stocktaking on a regular basis, or due to the current epidemic, would the stock of masks be transferred to other departments based on actual needs, such as providing the masks to frontline civil servants and healthcare staff to protect them against the epidemic? Please list in detail the stock level of CSD-manufactured masks held by various government departments based on the latest information.

g. Will the Government give priority to the frontline civil servants at various control points, including the frontline staff of the Immigration Department, the Customs and Excise Department, the Department of Health and security staff, as well as various healthcare staff in the supply of the additional masks manufactured daily by CSD, for their use in the course of duty?

h. Regarding the availability of CSD-manufactured masks on the market, will the Government promptly conduct thorough investigation and take follow-up actions, including a detailed investigation into the sources of the masks, and whether there was any unauthorised resale of the stock of masks held by government departments for profits? Will the Government immediately confiscate those CSD-manufactured masks available on the market?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Tanya (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

Before mid-January 2020, the filter masks manufactured by the Correctional Services Department (CSD) were mainly supplied to the Government Logistics Department (GLD) for its distribution to government departments. CSD does not have any relevant information on the numbers of masks manufactured by CSD obtained by various government departments or their stock levels of such masks. Besides, some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as social welfare organisations and schools have procured masks from CSD. The relevant NGOs are responsible for the handling of the masks after they were sold to them. In the light of the development of COVID-19 infection, there is a rapid increase in demand for filter masks from government departments. As such, CSD has ceased taking orders other than from GLD since January 2020.

Since the epidemic, the filter mask workshop in Lo Wu Correctional Institution (LWCI) of CSD has been increasing its production output continuously. Since early February, the workshop has been operating in 3 shifts round the clock, raising the output to about 2.5 million per month. Among them, about 1.8 million masks are supplied to GLD, whereas the remaining about 700 000 masks are set aside for distribution to cleansing workers engaged by outsourced cleaning service contractors through relevant departments (including Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Housing Department, Government Property Agency, Marine Department and Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (in respect of the Shenzhen Bay Port Hong Kong Port Area)).

The average numbers of masks per month supplied by CSD to GLD and NGOs in the past 5 years are set out below:

Year	Number of masks supplied				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
GLD	about 1.38 million	about 1.03 million	about 1.20 million	about 900 000	about 1.10 million
NGOs	about 20 000	about 18 000	about 10 000	about 18 000	about 10 000

The price of the masks supplied by CSD is determined by cost, which is about \$0.13 each.

Filter masks manufactured by CSD are delivered to GLD by the transport service contractor. CSD has been exercising strict control over the storage and transportation of filter masks to ensure proper delivery to GLD.

Regarding the sale of filter masks manufactured by CSD on the market occurred recently, the Department will assist other law enforcement agencies in following up the cases.

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