

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB323

(Question Serial No. 1748)

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Prison Management

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

If arrested and prosecuted persons are refused bail, they will be remanded while awaiting trial. It is noted that as they have not been convicted, they shall be entitled to more freedom than those convicted persons in custody. Under Rule 192 of the Prison Rules (Cap. 234A), every prisoner awaiting trial may procure food for himself. They are allowed to order food from outside restaurants for delivery to the reception centres in which they are detained.

In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. At present, how many reception centres allow the above arrangement? Can a list of the reception centres that allow prisoners awaiting trial to procure food be provided?
2. If the reception centres allow prisoners awaiting trial to procure food, they can order meal boxes from those food suppliers approved by the Correctional Services Department (CSD). In this connection, please provide (i) the name and number of food suppliers approved to provide private food to prisoners awaiting trial; (ii) the average price of a meal box provided by the approved food suppliers.
3. How many applications from food suppliers for providing private food to prisoners awaiting trial were received by CSD in the past 5 years? What were the respective numbers of applications approved and refused? What were the reasons for refusing the applications?
4. Have any statistics been kept on the number of prisoners awaiting trial who had applied for procuring food in each of the past 5 years?
5. Meanwhile, some prisoners awaiting trial stated that the meal boxes ordered had to undergo security check that took a long time before delivering to them. Would the Government provide the details of the security check after the ordering of meal boxes? What is the manpower arrangement for conducting the security check? How long does the security check for a meal box take on average? How to ensure that the food will not get

spoiled while waiting for security check to avoid posing risks to the health of the persons on remand?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The Correctional Services Department (CSD) provides persons in custody (PICs) with plain and wholesome meals. Persons on remand are allowed to procure food from licensed food suppliers in accordance with institutional requirements. Given the statutory requirement of preventing luxury or waste and taking into account the security consideration and principle of fairness, the Department will make related arrangements such as stipulating a food delivery schedule and conducting security check, etc. Where necessary, assistance will be provided to persons on remand and their families to find suitable food suppliers.
2. Although it is not the responsibility of institutions to identify food suppliers, the institutional management will continue to proactively approach nearby food suppliers and upload the information on “procurement of private food for persons on remand” onto the Department’s website for interested food suppliers to make applications.

The numbers of the existing food suppliers providing private food to persons on remand are tabulated below:

Institution	Number of food suppliers providing private food to persons on remand
Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre	3
Lo Wu Correctional Institution	1
Tai Lam Centre for Women	1
Stanley Prison	2

No applications from food suppliers were received to provide private food for persons on remand in Pik Uk Correctional Institution, Siu Lam Psychiatric Centre and Lai King Correctional Institution.

CSD does not maintain any information on the prices of food provided by the food suppliers.

3. In the past 5 years, several applications for becoming a private food supplier were refused for reasons including the applicants failing to provide the required documents for approval, or the applicants being unable to ensure the hygiene of food on arrival (including 2 applications for providing private food to persons on remand in Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre and 1 application to Tai Lam Centre for Women).

4. The average annual numbers of persons on remand applied to receive private food in the past 5 years are as follows:

Institution	Average annual number of persons on remand applied to receive private food
Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre	about 1 480
Stanley Prison (Note (1))	about 700
Tai Lam Centre for Women (Note (2))	about 140
Lo Wu Correctional Institution	about 50

Notes (1) Statistics available from 2019.

(2) Statistics available from 2016.

5. Private food delivered to institutions will be arranged to undergo security check in accordance with the established procedures and mechanism before distributing to persons on remand as quickly as practicable. The time required for security check and the actual manpower arrangement in various institutions are dependent on the number of orders for private food and operations of individual institutions. If they have any comments on the private food, they may convey them to the institutional management or directly to the food suppliers.

CSD reviews the management policies and the systems of meal provision for institutions from time to time having regard to the health and nutritional requirements of persons on remand.

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