

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB174

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Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Prison Management

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (WONG Kwok-hing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

Please provide the numbers of new books acquired for the libraries of various correctional institutions and the expenditures involved in each of the past 5 years. How are these books distributed by category? What are the criteria for book selection and procurement? What officers on establishment are responsible for this matter? What are the guidelines for compliance? Have the libraries provided appropriate books to persons in custody of other nationalities who are illiterate in English or Chinese?

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 287)

Reply:

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) encourages persons in custody (PICs) to cultivate an interest in and spend their leisure time on reading. Therefore, libraries have been set up in various correctional institutions to provide PICs with books of different types and in different languages. The total collections of the libraries in correctional institutions currently extend to over 120 000 copies. In the past 5 years, CSD incurred an average annual expenditure of about \$73,000 on the acquisition of new books for the libraries in various correctional institutions, and the average number of new books acquired every year was about 1 000 copies.

Staff members of the Education Unit of CSD are responsible for the acquisition of appropriate books for the libraries in accordance with the established procurement procedures, having regard to factors such as reading interests and learning needs of PICs. CSD does not maintain a breakdown of books by category. In addition, the Department borrows books from the Hong Kong Public Libraries to facilitate loans by PICs, replaces the borrowed books in batches on a regular basis and also receives books donated by outside organisations or individuals according to the established mechanism.

CSD has been making its best endeavours to increase the number of books in foreign languages. At present, books kept in the libraries of various correctional institutions are in

about 40 different languages. In addition to books in the Chinese and English languages, CSD has acquired over 6 300 books in other languages over the past 5 years for reading by PICs of other nationalities who are illiterate in English and Chinese. The distribution of books by language is tabulated below:

Book	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Traditional Chinese	86 497	70
Simplified Chinese	8 132	7
English	13 378	11
Other languages (Note)	15 121	12
Total	123 128	100

Note: Not less than 40 different languages, e.g. Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, Korean, Spanish, French, Hindi, Urdu, etc.

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