

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB177

(Question Serial No. 3437)

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 list the recorded numbers of cases in which frontline officers used “necessary force” in various prisons and correctional institutions in the past 5 years. What were the reasons for using “necessary force”? Please provide a breakdown with explanation. Please list the recorded numbers of persons in custody and staff members injured due to the use of “necessary force” in various prisons in the past 5 years. Please list what auxiliary equipment was made use of when using “necessary force”. What was the expenditure involved? Please provide a breakdown with explanation.

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 290)

Reply:

By virtue of the duties and powers conferred by law, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) is committed to ensuring a secure, safe, humane, decent and healthy custodial environment.

Rule 237 of the Prison Rules (Cap. 234A) stipulates that no correctional officer in dealing with persons in custody (PICs) shall use force unnecessarily and, when the application of force to a PIC is necessary, no more force than is necessary shall be used. The appropriate force to be used by correctional officers against PICs should be non-lethal, defensive and minimal to prevent correctional officers themselves, PICs or other persons from being harmed.

The reasons for correctional officers using necessary force on PICs include stopping PICs from self-harm or resistance behaviour, fighting among themselves and attacking others, etc. The numbers of cases in which correctional officers used necessary force against PICs and the numbers of persons injured in the past 5 years are tabulated below:

| Year | Number of cases involving the use of necessary force | Number of PICs injured | Number of correctional officers injured |
|------|--|------------------------|---|
| 2022 | 77 | 80 | 23 |
| 2021 | 101 | 123 | 18 |
| 2020 | 91 | 117 | 14 |
| 2019 | 69 | 93 | 40 |
| 2018 | 70 | 64 | 39 |

Correctional officers are generally equipped with oleoresin capsicum foam and extendable truncheons during supervision of PICs. Since the information about the expenditure on and the quantity of the relevant equipment procured by CSD involve its operational deployment details, it is not appropriate to disclose such information.

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