Reply Serial No.

HAB186

CONTROLLING   OFFICER'S   REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2821)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

It is estimated that there will be 14.6 million of books and multimedia materials in stock in 2017.   Among them, what is the percentage of simplified Chinese books and multimedia materials in the total number of books and multimedia materials in stock?   Has the Department drawn up an appropriate standard for such a percentage?   If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Chung-tai (Member Question No. 23)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) endeavours to maintain a balanced collection of printed and non-print materials, for lending and reference, in Chinese and English, targeting adults and children.   As at 31 December 2016, the HKPL had a collection of 14.35 million items of library materials, of which 12.52 million items were print materials (books) and 1.83 million items were non-print materials (multimedia materials). In addition, the HKPL provided more than 5 000 titles of newspapers and periodicals, about 65 electronic databases and 240 000 e-books.

As the HKPL handles Chinese books as a single category without differentiation between those in traditional Chinese characters and simplified Chinese characters, breakdown of the total stock figures on books in traditional Chinese characters and simplified Chinese characters is not available.   That said, based on the number of Chinese books acquired through the relevant contract suppliers of the HKPL, it is estimated that the HKPL purchased about 39 000 items of books in simplified Chinese characters against the total 778 000 items of books acquired in 2016-17.   In addition, the HKPL also acquired about 55 000 items of multimedia materials.   No breakdown is available for multimedia materials by different languages.

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