

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HAB194**

**(Question Serial No. 1841)**

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

With regard to the public library services,

- (1) The number of items of library materials borrowed further dropped last year, falling behind targets for 2 consecutive years; what measures does the Government have to deal with the situation? What is the relevant work plan for the coming year?
- (2) Please provide the total library book stock, the numbers of books being written off, the numbers of newly acquired books and the expenditures for acquiring new books for public libraries in Hong Kong in each of the past 3 years; and
- (3) Does the Government have any plan to build new libraries or setting up additional mobile libraries? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon HO Kai-ming (Member Question No. 45)

Reply:

- (1) The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has been devoting efforts to enhance its services and facilities to meet the community's needs for knowledge, information, self-learning and continuous education, as well as the constructive use of leisure time. The LCSD adopts a multi-pronged approach in promoting public library services and nurturing a reading culture in the territory through the following measures:
  - (a) organising a wide variety of reading activities at the territory-wide and district levels for readers of different age groups. Thematic panels and roving exhibitions of books with tie-in recommended booklists are scheduled at various libraries. The LCSD will continue to plan and organise diversified activities to promote reading in 2017-18, and has earmarked \$2.4 million for organising these reading activities for the year;

- (b) forging closer partnership with the District Councils (DCs) and local bodies. In 2017-18, LCSD will continue to secure funds from the DCs for organising diversified extension activities to sustain the interest of reading in the community, step up its block loan service by further exploring different types of organisations for arranging block loans or setting up community libraries that serve its specific target groups, such as the elderly, ethnic minorities, youths and special groups. Wider publicity will be arranged to reach out to the local communities and organisations to promote library services and collections including e-resources;
  - (c) connecting actively with educational bodies including the Education Bureau, schools, parent-teacher associations, nursery institutions, etc. to explore the reading needs/interests of children and seek collaborative opportunities in block loan service and extension activities in encouraging lifelong learning and cultivating reading habits among them;
  - (d) replenishing new library stock and enriching e-resources for all existing libraries by planning to acquire about 830 000 items of new print and audio-visual library materials in 2017-18; to acquire or subscribe to 10 e-book collections (covering about 260 000 titles) and 64 e-databases and enhance the digitised collection in 2017-18. The estimated expenditure on the acquisition of library materials in 2017-18 is \$102.8 million; and
  - (e) leveraging on the use of new and information technology to offer more convenient public library services to the public via the on-line and mobile platforms; and planning to launch, on a trial basis, 3 self-service library units, 1 each on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories at convenient locations with heavier pedestrian flow and away from existing libraries in the second half of 2017-18, to provide round-the-clock services such as borrowing, return, payment and pickup of reserved library materials.
- (2) The total library book stock, the numbers of books being written off, the numbers of newly acquired books and the expenditures for acquiring new books for the Hong Kong Public Libraries in the past 3 years are set out in table below.

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Total stock of library books (million items)</b>	<b>Numbers of books being written off (million items)</b>	<b>Number of books acquired (million items)</b>	<b>Expenditure (\$ million)</b>
2014-15	11.88 (as at 31 March 2015)	0.40	0.74	50.38
2015-16	12.40 (as at 31 March 2016)	0.36	0.77	52.58
2016-17	12.54 (as at 28 February 2017)	0.11 (as at 28 February 2017)	0.77 (Estimated)	53.14 (Estimated)

- (3) A new district library in the North West Kowloon Reclamation Area Site 6 is under construction and the works are anticipated to be completed in 2020.

The LCSD has enhanced the mobile library service progressively since July 2014 by introducing 2 new mobile libraries and reshuffling the routes of the existing mobile libraries. Since then, 17 new mobile library stops have been added or are being arranged. The LCSD will continue to monitor and review the usage of its mobile library services for the effective utilisation of resources to better serve the public.

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