

HAB451

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 5428)

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:

Regarding the self-service library station of the Hong Kong Public Libraries, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The first self-service library station was launched last year at the sitting-out area of the Island East Sports Centre. What are the expenditures involved in launching the self-service library station and the estimated annual operating expenditures? So far, what is the utilisation rate of the self-service library station? How is the effectiveness?
2. What are the expected dates of commencement of service of the other 2 self-service library stations and their locations? What are the estimated expenditures required? Will the Government consider increasing the number of self-service library stations?
3. What criteria does the Government adopt in determining the locations of the self-service library stations? Will consideration be given to launching self-service library stations in MTR stations in future?
4. What criteria will the Government adopt in assessing the effectiveness of the scheme?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 87)

Reply:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has launched a pilot scheme to provide 3 self-service library stations, 1 each on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories at convenient locations with heavier pedestrian flow and far from existing libraries. The first library station in the Eastern District was opened on 5 December 2017 while the remaining 2 in the Yau Tsim Mong District and the Sha Tin District respectively are planned to be opened by phases in the second half of 2018 tentatively. It can hold about 300 items of library materials at any one time. In 2017-18, the non-recurrent cost and the recurrent cost for the library station in the Eastern District is about \$2.6 million and \$0.7 million respectively. The LCSD has earmarked \$3.5 million for the daily operation

and maintenance of the library stations in 2018-19. The full-year operating cost for 3 library stations is about \$4.8 million, excluding cost of library staff redeployed from other library facilities. Up to the end of February 2018, the library station in the Eastern District had recorded a total of 7 187 loans.

In determining the locations of the self-service library stations, relevant factors such as access convenience, distance from existing libraries, possibility of 24-hour operation, availability of power supply, and other technical aspects in relation to the installation, operation and logistics support for the library station will be taken into consideration. MTR stations, which are not available for 24-hour operation, have not been considered under the pilot scheme. The LCSD will conduct a review in 2018-19 to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot scheme taking into account the utilisation, cost effectiveness, feedback of the users, sustainability and complementarity with other library services. Subject to the outcome of the review, the LCSD will explore the feasibility of extending the service to other locations and seek additional funding as required.

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