

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****HAB329****(Question Serial No. 3369)**Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (5) Public LibrariesControlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home AffairsQuestion:

The Hong Kong Public Libraries currently provides book drops at 3 Mass Transit Railway (MTR) stations:

1. Please provide the annual usage of book drops at each of the stations in the past 5 years, as measured by the number of books; and
2. Does the Department have any plans to provide book drops at more MTR stations or other public areas? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon IP Kin-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 144)Reply:

1. The total number of library books returned through the book drops at 3 major Mass Transit Railway (MTR) interchange stations in the past 5 years is set out in the table below:

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Central Station</b> | <b>Kowloon Tong Station</b> | <b>Nam Cheong Station</b> |
|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2015        | 187 346                | 195 736                     | 79 840                    |
| 2016        | 193 303                | 187 897                     | 78 470                    |
| 2017        | 206 623                | 187 077                     | 81 179                    |
| 2018        | 203 946                | 180 124                     | 79 268                    |
| 2019        | 165 475                | 158 240                     | 74 474                    |

2. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has provided book drop service under a trial scheme at 3 major MTR interchange stations, namely Central, Kowloon Tong and Nam Cheong since late September 2011. The review on the scheme conducted in 2013 revealed that the service was under-utilised as most readers still preferred visiting the libraries in person to return and borrow books on the same occasion. The monthly average usage of the book drop service in 2019 was about

38% of the planned capacity. In consideration of the habits and preference of the library users and the cost-effectiveness of the service, the LCSD has no plan to extend the service to more MTR stations or other public areas at this stage.

On the other hand, the LCSD provides 3 self-service library stations under a trial scheme, 1 each on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and in the New Territories at convenient locations with heavier pedestrian flow but far from existing libraries, rendering round-the-clock services such as borrowing, return, payment and pickup of reserved library materials. The 3 self-service library stations located at the Island East Sports Centre Sitting-out Area, Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Tsuen Nam Road, Tai Wai of the New Territories commenced service in December 2017, December 2018 and January 2020 respectively. The LCSD will conduct a review on the trial scheme to evaluate its effectiveness taking into account the utilisation, cost effectiveness, users' feedback, sustainability and complementarity with other library services. Subject to the outcome of the review, the LCSD will explore the feasibility of providing self-service library stations in other districts with the current mode and seek additional funding as required.

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