

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB145

(Question Serial No. 2573)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

How many days have public libraries, mobile libraries and self-service library stations been temporarily closed respectively since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic?

How many book sterilisers are available for use by visitors in various public libraries, mobile libraries and self-service library stations? In the coming year, how many public libraries, mobile libraries and self-service library stations will be provided with book sterilisers and how many additional book sterilisers will be provided?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 101)

Reply:

In view of the situation of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has to align with the Government's anti-epidemic measures. Public library services were temporarily suspended on and off during the epidemic since 29 January 2020 to reduce the flow of people and social contact. In 2020, static and mobile libraries suspended services for 177 and 282 days respectively, inclusive of regular library closing days; self-service library stations suspended services for 127 days. During the temporary closure of the facilities, public libraries continued to provide e-books, e-databases and other online services for the public.

The LCSD has already been providing a total of 83 book sterilisers at all the static libraries. The libraries would review the usage rate, actual situation and needs if additional book sterilisers would be provided. While mobile libraries and self-service library stations are not provided with book sterilisers owing to environment and space constraints, the LCSD has arranged enhanced cleansing and application of anti-microbial coating for the facilities.