

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HAB169**

**(Question Serial No. 2358)**

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:

1. Please list the usage rate of each of the 3 self-service library stations (in Sha Tin, Sai Wan Ho and Tsim Sha Tsui) in 2020;
2. What is the estimated expenditure for the self-service library stations of the Hong Kong Public Libraries in 2021-22?
3. During the closure of public libraries due to the pandemic, did the self-service library stations continue to operate? If not, please explain the reasons for the suspension of operation; will the Department consider maintaining the operation of the self-service library stations when public libraries were closed due to the pandemic in future?

Asked by: Hon MA Fung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 68)

Reply:

1. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (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 usage of the self-service library stations located at the Island East Sports Centre Sitting-out Area, Hong Kong Cultural Centre in Kowloon and Tsuen Nam Road, Tai Wai of the New Territories in 2020 is set out below:

<b>Usage (number of)</b>	<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>Kowloon</b>	<b>New Territories</b>
Loans of Books	10 851	8 313	14 312
Returns of Books	28 727	8 475	36 467
Pickups of Reserved Materials	3 084	1 927	2 543
<b>Total</b>	<b>42 662</b>	<b>18 715</b>	<b>53 322</b>

2. The LCSD has earmarked \$5.8 million for the daily operation and maintenance of the library stations in 2021-22, excluding cost of library staff redeployed from other library facilities.
3. In view of the situation of the COVID-19 epidemic, the LCSD has to align with the Government's anti-epidemic measures. At the onset of the outbreak in 2020, services of library facilities including the self-service library stations were suspended to reduce the flow of people and maintain social distancing. With the easing of the epidemic, the LCSD resumed its services in a gradual and orderly manner, including resuming the operation of the 3 self-service library stations in September 2020 and providing services as usual when libraries were temporarily closed in the light of the latest epidemic situation from early December 2020 to mid-February 2021.

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