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**GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
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3 December 2015

Clerk to Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attention: Ms Joanne MAK)

Dear Ms MAK,

**Response to the Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council
regarding the request of the Hon TANG Ka-piu for the discussion
on the provision of additional library facilities**

I refer to your letter dated 12 November 2015 addressed to the Secretary for Home Affairs.

Regarding the letter of the Hon TANG Ka-piu requesting the provision of additional library facilities attached to your letter, our response is set out below.

Planning standards for public libraries

As stated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG), one district library should be provided for each district and for every 200 000 population. In planning for the provision of public

library facilities, apart from the HKPSG, the Government will also take into account such factors as the geographical location, transport facilities and demographic characteristics of the population; the utilisation of existing libraries; the development plan of infrastructure and community facilities of the district; the changing needs (including demographic changes) of the community, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the services. Where appropriate, we will also consider providing a major library in lieu of two district libraries for the district with a population of 400 000. We will take into account the above factors in deciding whether the public library services for a particular district should be enhanced through the provision of small libraries/mobile library stops or the expansion/reprovisioning of existing libraries in light of the circumstances of the district. In general, the Government has made reference to the HKPSG and the aforementioned factors in the current provision of public library facilities in various districts. Details are set out at Annex.

In conjunction with the Planning Department, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) conducted reviews on the HKPSG for public libraries in 2010 and mid-2014. We considered that the broad guideline, based on the current population factor, as set out in the HKPSG had already provided an optimal basis for the planning and provision of major libraries and district libraries. These existing libraries, together with the network of small libraries and mobile library stops, have by and large provided suitable library services to the 18 districts of the territory. We consider that the guidelines set out in the HKPSG for the provision of district libraries remains valid and suitable.

Provision of library services in the Sha Tin District and the Tai Wai Area

The Sha Tin District currently has a population of about 660 000. A major library (Sha Tin Public Library) serving a population of 400 000, a district library (Ma On Shan Public Library), a small library (Lek Yuen Public Library) and 14 mobile library service stops are available in the district. To further enhance the public library services in the Sha Tin District, a new district library is being constructed by the LCSD in Area

14B (Yuen Chau Kok), Sha Tin. The construction works is scheduled for completion in the first half of 2016, to be followed by internal installation works.

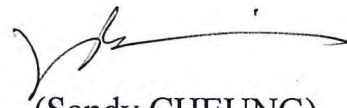
Following the development of Tai Wai and with the support of the Sha Tin District Council, the LCSD established an additional mobile library stop at Mei Tin Estate, Tai Wai in February 2015, increasing the number of mobile library stops in Tai Wai to four. Furthermore, the LCSD has actively explored the feasibility of providing an additional small library in Tai Wai. However, consideration of the sites available cannot be proceeded further as they are all far away from the town centre of Tai Wai, thus failing to cater for the community need, or due to various constraints (including the floor area/loading not meeting the operational requirements of a public library, or the sites having other land use/tenancy development plan, etc). We have also examined the provision of a temporary library in the vacant campus of the former Tai Wai Public School at Tai Wai Tsuen in Sha Tin but to no avail as the campus site is located in a “Village Type Development” zone and the land will be used for a small house development. The LCSD will endeavour to identify a possible site for a library in the vicinity of the Tai Wai MTR Station in the town centre.

Moreover, the LCSD, in collaboration with non-government organisations and community groups, also sets up community libraries in suitable locations to provide local residents with more flexible and convenient library services. At present, there are a total of 26 community libraries in Sha Tin District where six of them are located in Tai Wai. In the meantime, the LCSD has been actively developing the “library without walls” services to provide readers with library services beyond time and physical constraints. The on-line services of the public libraries, such as the Hong Kong Public Libraries Website, the Multimedia Information System and the Mobile Application, are well received by the public, as shown by the constant growth in their usage rates.

We fully appreciate the great demand for library services from the residents of Tai Wai. The LCSD will continue to identify a suitable

site for a small library. We will also keep in view the needs of individual communities and enhance library services through various means as appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sandy CHEUNG', written in a cursive style.

(Sandy CHEUNG)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

c.c. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Number of existing libraries and mobile libraries by district
(as at November 2015)

Type of libraries District (Population) ^{Note 1}	No. of district libraries which should be provided according to the HKPSG	Major libraries	District libraries	Small libraries	Total no. of static libraries	No. of mobile library stops	Insufficiency based on the HKPSG standards
Hong Kong Island							
Central & Western (254 600)	1	1	1	1	3	0 ^{Note 2}	Nil
Wan Chai (154 500)	1		1	1	2		Nil
Eastern (585 200)	2		3	3	6	4	Nil
Southern (276 800)	1		1	3	4	5	Nil
Kowloon							
Sham Shui Po (399 000)	1		2	2	4	5	Nil
Kowloon City (413 300)	2	1	1	2	4	3	Nil
Wong Tai Sin (429 600)	2		2	4	6	3	Nil
Kwun Tong (644 000)	3		3	3	6	9	Nil
Yau Tsim Mong (322 500)	1		2	2	4	1	Nil
New Territories							
Kwai Tsing (514 600)	2		3		3	11	Nil
Tsuen Wan (308 500)	1	1		1	2	6	Nil
Tuen Mun (501 100)	2	1	1	1	3	10	Nil
Yuen Long (610 200)	3	1	1 ^{Note 3}	1	3	10	Nil
North (313 100)	1		2	1 ^{Note 4}	3	5	Nil
Tai Po (310 100)	1		1		1	9	Nil
Sha Tin (661 200)	3	1	1 ^{Note 5}	1	3	14	Nil

Type of libraries District (Population) ^{Note 1}	No. of district libraries which should be provided according to the HKPSG	Major libraries	District libraries	Small libraries	Total no. of static libraries	No. of mobile library stops	Insufficiency based on the HKPSG standards
Sai Kung (463 700)	2		3		3	6	Nil
Islands (148 700)	1		2	5	7	5	Nil
Total	30	6	30	31	67 ^{Note 6}	106	Nil

Note:

1. The population projections by District Council in mid-2015 are estimates of the Planning Department.
2. The establishment of a mobile library stop in the vicinity of Sheung Wan Cultural Square is underway.
3. The construction of a new district library in Area 3, Yuen Long is underway for the reprovisioning of the Yuen Long Public Library currently located at Yuen Long Government Offices, Kiu Lok Square.
4. Internal fitting-out works for a new small library in the Fanling South area is underway.
5. The construction of a new district library in Area 14B (Yuen Chau Kok), Sha Tin is underway.
6. As a territory-wide library, the Hong Kong Central Library is not included in the total number.