



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局  
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat  
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

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[Translation]

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Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Attn: Miss Connie AU)  
(Fax: 2869 6794)

Dear Miss AU,

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene  
Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to Animal Rights  
The Government's Response to Follow-up Actions  
Raised by the Subcommittee**

Thank you for the Secretariat's letters dated 23 April 2021 and 13 May 2021, regarding the matters raised by Members at the Subcommittee meetings on 19 April 2021 and 11 May 2021. The Government's response is set out as follows.

- (a) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) received 31, 33 and 27 complaints respectively over the past 3 years regarding suspected animal abandonment.

Under section 22 of the Rabies Ordinance (Cap. 421) (the Ordinance), a keeper of any animal who abandons that animal without reasonable excuse is liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment of 6 months. However, it can sometimes be difficult for the enforcement officer, particularly in cases without witnesses, to adduce evidence and substantiate a case under this section beyond reasonable doubt that a person has abandoned an animal without reasonable excuse. AFCD has not instituted prosecutions under section 22 of

the Ordinance over the past 3 years. In past cases, upon investigation by AFCD, most cases were actually found to be related to dog owners accidentally losing their dogs, instead of animal abandonment. Those dog owners had also paid the detention fees in accordance with the Ordinance and retrieved their dogs. Nevertheless, in dealing with cases involving dog owners accidentally losing their dogs, prosecutors may press charges against the dog owners concerned pursuant to section 23 of the Ordinance, for failing to take proper control of their dogs in public places. The maximum penalty for contravening this provision is a fine of \$10,000. Over the past 3 years, the number of cases successfully prosecuted by AFCD pursuant to section 23 of the Ordinance are 140, 169 and 103 respectively. Cases concerned include nuisances caused by dogs not properly controlled in public places and dogs attacking other animals in public places, etc.

- (b) (i) Among the reports received by the Police and AFCD regarding suspected animal cruelty, upon investigation, most of these reports were actually found not to involve animal cruelty, but related to nuisance or other circumstances. Details of the cases concerned are tabulated as follows –

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of reports regarding suspected animal cruelty</b>	<b>Cases that were found to possibly involve actual animal cruelty after investigation</b>
2019	288	54
2020 (As at 30 September)	199	40

The Government does not have record on the number of cases that were found to possibly involve actual animal cruelty after investigation between 2016 and 2018. The number of reports received regarding suspected animal cruelty in these years are 262, 275 and 368 respectively.

- (ii) and (iii) The number of persons prosecuted by the Police and AFCD against animal cruelty, convicted persons and relevant penalties imposed in the past five years are listed at **Annex A**. The breakdown of number of persons convicted for animal cruelty in the past five years, according to type of cruelty act, is listed at **Annex B**.

- (c) Regarding the suggestions from the World Dog Alliance (LC Paper No. CB(2)1079/20-21(01)), the response of the Education Bureau (EDB) is as follows.

Regarding “(1) Inclusion of more content about animal protection in the curriculum guides”, EDB has all along attached great importance to students’ development of positive values and attitudes and strives to promote values education (including life education) in schools. The curricula for levels from kindergarten to secondary already include learning elements related to life education, among which are topics on protection of animal lives, so that children and students are infused with positive values and attitudes such as showing care and respect and shouldering responsibility. It is stipulated in the Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017) that one of the learning objectives of the learning area of “Nature and Living” is “to appreciate, respect and care for nature”. Through daily learning activities and study of real-life themes, children are inspired to care for nature, appreciate its beauty and protect animals and plants. Primary school students learn the ways to care for animals and plants in General Studies and English Language. The relevant values and attitudes are fostered through studying different modules (e.g. “pet keeping” and “respect for lives”). Furthermore, in junior secondary Science and senior secondary Biology, students learn of the ways humans live in harmony with animals and show respect for all living things and the environment. Ethics and Religious Studies at senior secondary level cultivates an awareness of the significance of co-existence between humans and animals, whereas the Applied Learning course “Animal Care” at senior secondary level introduces the concept of animal welfare and related legislation. In addition, important values and attitudes such as caring for others, empathy, law-abidingness, respect for others and being responsible are covered in the moral and civic education curriculum for primary and secondary levels. It is incumbent on schools to adopt the recommendations of the relevant curriculum guides and frameworks, and develop their school-based values education curriculum and learning activities, aligning with their missions, school characteristics and student development needs, etc., so that students’ needs and development can be catered for. Acting on the recommendations of the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, EDB is now reviewing and refining the curriculum framework for values

education. The update will include enriching the learning elements of life education (including animal protection) to keep up with social developments, address students' needs and stakeholders' demands, and enhancing promotion. Admittedly, school education plays a pivotal part in students' development of virtues, but whether values education can be fully implemented and deliver the expected results also hinges on the support and active participation of parents, the community, the media, etc.

Regarding “(2) Trial designation of primary and secondary schools as education bases for promoting animal protection”, in collaboration with schools, other government departments and various organisations, EDB has continuously developed learning and teaching resources and organised professional development programmes for teachers, to assist schools in promoting life education. To support schools' promotional efforts, a learning resources website dedicated to caring for animals has been set up, as a one-stop platform to provide diversified learning and teaching resources to teachers, including daily-life examples under the themes of “caring for animals is my duty”, “caring for animals” and “getting along with pets”; recommended book lists on caring for animals; multimedia educational programmes on the work of animal welfare organisations, training of guide dogs, etc.; and instant messaging stickers with promotional messages about caring for animals. Schools may also make flexible use of the Life-wide Learning Grant or secure additional resources from the Quality Education Fund to launch learning activities related to values education. In addition, through inspections, curriculum development visits, etc., EDB has been seeking to learn about and monitor the quality of learning and teaching in schools, including the efficacy of values education, while providing schools with specific professional advice according to their performance in learning and teaching, to ensure effective achievement of the learning objectives set out in the relevant curriculum guides.

Regarding “(3) Implementation of ‘Project on promotion of reading on animal welfare’” and “(4) Implementation of ‘Project on campus-friendly dogs’”, Local schools have, in accordance with the relevant curriculum guides and documents, as well as their missions, individual circumstances and student needs, been adopting diversified

modes (including classroom learning, weekly assemblies and class teacher periods) and making flexible use of lesson time to provide students with learning experiences that dovetail with students' everyday life and development, thereby nurturing positive values and attitudes and appropriate behaviours. Schools are advised to provide students with authentic and real-life learning experiences, such as visits and voluntary services, to help them nurture positive values and attitudes through experience and practice. Moreover, by motivating students to read extensively across different categories, schools not only help them acquire knowledge in specific fields, but also foster in them a heightened awareness of positive values and a caring and responsible life attitude. Schools in Hong Kong have been actively working with tertiary institutions, government departments and organisations to provide students with values education-focused learning experiences that complement their everyday life and development, by taking reference from multi-faceted professional expertise and experience and launching various diversified programmes.

Yours sincerely,

[Signed]

( Amor WONG )  
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c.

Secretary for Education  
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation  
Commissioner of Police

**Number of persons prosecuted by the Police and AFCD against animal cruelty,  
convicted persons and relevant penalties imposed in the past five years**

Year	Number of persons prosecuted	Number of persons convicted	Penalties imposed		
			Fine (\$)	Imprisonment	Community Service
2016	15	11	5,000	28 days to 6 months	100 to 120 hours
2017	24	24	4,000	7 days to 1 year	80 to 160 hours
2018	28	22	2,000 to 6,000	14 days to 1 year	80 to 180 hours
2019	29	25	2,000 to 8,000	14 days to 10 months	60 to 240 hours
2020 (As at 30 September)	12	9	Not applicable	14 days to 8 months	120 to 240 hours

**Number of persons convicted for animal cruelty in the past five years  
(Breakdown according to type of cruelty act)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Severe Negligence in Care-taking</b>	<b>Cruelly Kicking, Beating, Ill-treating or Torturing</b>	<b>Killing</b>	<b>Importing animals into Hong Kong in a manner that involves animal cruelty</b>	<b>Total</b>
2016	6	5	0	0	11
2017	14	8	2	0	24
2018	10	8	3	1	22
2019	14	9	0	2	25
2020 (As at 30 September)	4	3	1	1	9