

(Translation)

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 20

(Written Reply)

Asked by: the Hon Choy So-yuk

Date of meeting: 26 January 2005

Replied by: Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands

Question

It has been reported that some people make profits by reselling the used clothes collected on the pretext of environmental protection from the metal cages they place in public places over a prolonged period. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of:

- (a) the number of relevant complaints received by the authorities last year, details of these complaints and, among them, the number of cases which were confirmed to be activities conducted by business establishments;
- (b) the number of applications received by the Lands Department ("LD") for placing metal cages in public places to collect used clothes, the respective numbers of applications approved and rejected, and the reasons for rejecting those applications; and
- (c) the conditions LD imposes when approving the relevant applications and whether they include a stipulation that the activities involved should be of a non-commercial nature; how LD ensures that the successful applicants will comply with the conditions and the penalties that may be imposed on those breaching such conditions; of the number of cases discovered by LD which involved breaches of the conditions last year and the punishments imposed on the people concerned?

Reply

President,

My reply to the three-part question is as follows:

- (a) Last year (2004), Lands Department received 30 cases of complaints concerning use of metal cages for collection of used clothing. The majority of the complaints concerned unauthorized occupation of land, obstruction and nuisance caused by clothing over-spilt from cages.
- (b) Last year, Lands Department received 324 applications for placing of metal cages in public places for collection of used clothing. Among these applications, 288 cases were approved, 24 rejected and 12 under processing. Reasons for rejection included the following: concerned organizations unable to prove their non-profit-making status or the same areas have been booked for other activities for the scheduled period.
- (c) Organisations who wish to apply to collect used clothing using metal cages placed on streets in public should be non-profit-making body or

social service organizations. Lands Department would require applicants to submit documents to prove that they are non-profit-making bodies or social service organisations. According to current policy and under Lands Department's jurisdiction, if an applicant fails to comply with any requirement as stipulated in the approval letter, their articles are liable to forfeiture, with the clearance and removal costs to be recovered from the applicant. Last year, Lands Department identified one case of a breach of condition as stipulated in the approval letter. The organization concerned has been warned and advised to make improvements.

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