

Press release

LCQ12: Counterfeit \$10 coins

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

Following is a question by the Hon Albert Chan and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 18):

Question:

I have recently received complaints from quite a number of public light bus drivers that they received many counterfeit \$10 coins and therefore suffered huge economic loss. It is learnt that such counterfeit coins are of a very high degree of resemblance to genuine ones, making it difficult for the general public to tell if they are counterfeit coins. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) of the number of counterfeit \$10 coins seized last year;
- (b) of the existing measures to prevent such coins from circulation; and
- (c) whether it will reconsider the suggestion to stop issuing and progressively recalling \$10 coins and replace them with \$10 banknotes, in order to resolve the problem of counterfeit coins; if it will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(a) In 2008, the Police seized a total of 58,601 counterfeit \$10 coins.

(b) The Police has been liaising closely with the local banking industry as well as other relevant sectors (such as public transport operators), and law enforcement agencies in the Mainland and overseas, and conducting prompt and targeted investigation through intelligence-led operations. The Police will continue to spare no efforts in combating offences related to counterfeit Hong Kong coins.

In addition, banks will validate \$10 coins withdrawn from circulation in order to forestall the re-circulation of counterfeit coins.

(c) According to the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA), the market demand for the \$10 coin as a means of exchange in day-to-day retail transactions has increased over the past few years, in particular in wet markets and other small-value transactions. The HKMA has no plan to withdraw the \$10 coins. It will continue to closely monitor the market situation so as to ensure that currencies issued can cater for the demand of the community.

Ends