

Press release

LCQ11: Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks Scheme

Wednesday, November 25, 2009

Following is a question by the Hon Lau Wong-fat and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, in the Legislative Council today (November 25):

Question:

Regarding the problems arising from the Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks Scheme (the Scheme), will the Government inform this Council:

(a) of the total number of personalised vehicle registration marks comprising three or more letters that have been sold by the Transport Department since the implementation of the Scheme, as well as the auction proceeds involved;

(b) whether the authorities have compiled statistics on the total number of complainants and injured persons who could not clearly state the registration marks (in particular those with single words or short phrases formed by letters) of the vehicles concerned because they did not know English, when dealing with cases involving traffic problems and accidents since the implementation of the Scheme; and how the time required for complainants and injured persons to clearly state the vehicles' registration marks comprising two letters compares to that in respect of the vehicles' registration marks comprising three or more letters; and

(c) if the authorities have sought legal advice on whether the Scheme discriminates against persons who do not know English; if they have, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(a) Since the implementation of the Personalised Vehicle Registration Marks (PVRMs) Scheme in 2006, the Transport Department has allocated upon sale by auction 6,970 PVRMs using three or more letters and the sales proceeds of these marks amounted to about \$89.15 million.

(b) The Administration has no statistics on whether there has been any complainant or injured person who could not clearly state the vehicle registration marks because they did not know English and has also not conducted any research on the time required for identifying vehicle registration marks made up by letters.

Whether the PVRMs would bring difficulty to law enforcement is one of the criteria for vetting PVRMs applications. Moreover, during law enforcement, apart from the vehicle registration marks, the Hong Kong Police Force would refer to other descriptions of the particulars of the vehicles (e.g. the type, make, model and colour), and check such information against the registration records in the computerised licensing system of the Transport Department.

(c) The PVRMs Scheme has been working well since its introduction and complies with Hong Kong's existing law. We do not consider that the Scheme discriminates against persons who do not know English.

Ends