

## LCQ10: Granting the elderly free admission to exhibitions of museums

Following is a question by the Hon Starry Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui, in the Legislative Council today (August 25):

Question:

At present, the permanent exhibitions in five designated museums (i.e. Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence and Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum) under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department are free for admission, while admission fees are payable for the thematic exhibitions therein. Admission fees are also payable for the exhibitions of the Hong Kong Science Museum and the Hong Kong Space Museum. Persons aged 60 or above (the elderly) are offered a concessionary rate at 50 per cent of the admission fees. On the other hand, designated museums and tourist attractions in Beijing, Taipei and Macao currently grant free admission to persons aged 60/65 or above. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) in respect of the various museums in each of the past five years, of (i) the total amount of income from the admission fees paid by the elderly as well as (ii) the respective attendances and, among them, the respective percentages of the attendances of the elderly;

(2) whether it has forecast the respective rates of increase in the attendances for exhibitions each year to be brought about by an across-the-board free admission for the elderly to all exhibitions of various museums; and

(3) whether it will consider granting the elderly free admission to the exhibitions of all museums; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

With regard to the questions from Hon Starry Lee, our consolidated reply is as follows:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) offers the general public free admission to its Hong Kong Film Archive, two visual arts centres, and permanent exhibitions of 12 museums, including Hong Kong Museum of Art, Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence (currently closed for renovation), Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery, Law Uk Folk Museum, Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum, Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong Railway Museum, Sheung Yiu Folk Museum and Sam Tung Uk Museum. Free admission to the

permanent exhibitions of the Hong Kong Science Museum and the Hong Kong Space Museum are also offered on every Wednesday.

The visitation of the 14 LCSD museums in the past five years is set out at the Annex. The LCSD does not collect age information of visitors of its museums and therefore cannot provide a breakdown of visitors' profile by age and the corresponding admission revenue. For the same reason, the LCSD is unable to estimate the impact of offering senior citizens aged 60 or above (the elderly) free admission to the permanent exhibitions of Hong Kong Science Museum and Hong Kong Space Museum and the fee-charging special exhibitions of all museums.

Currently, the elderly can enjoy the following admission privileges in addition to those enjoyed by the general public:

- 50 per cent discount on the ticket to the permanent exhibitions of Hong Kong Science Museum and Hong Kong Space Museum, as well as the fee-charging special exhibitions of all museums;
- 50 per cent discount on the Museum Pass (i.e. \$25) for unlimited visits to the permanent exhibitions and fee-charging special exhibitions of all museums within a one-year validity period; and
- 50 per cent discount on the ticket to sky shows at the Space Theatre of Hong Kong Space Museum, and screenings at the cinema of Hong Kong Film Archive.

Moreover, visit groups of 10 or more from non-profit making organisations and charitable organisations serving the elderly can apply for waiver of admission charges and/or free guided tours from respective museums.

The LCSD examines and reviews the related arrangements as appropriate from time to time but has no plan to change the current arrangements for admission fees at this time.