

## LCQ11: Display of train compartment

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Following is a question by the Hon Bernard Chan and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, in the Legislative Council today (December 13):

### Question:

It has been reported that a train compartment with a history of almost a hundred years, which was originally arranged to be displayed at the Hong Kong Museum of History, is placed on a derelict open site in Cha Kwo Ling. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) how it will deal with the train compartment;
- (b) whether it has formulated any guidelines on the handling of large heritage items, so that they will not be left unattended on open land without proper maintenance;
- (c) how it deals with donated heritage items which are not suitable for use as museum exhibits; and
- (d) whether it will consider setting up a Transport Museum for presenting the history of Hong Kong's public transport?

### Reply:

Madam President,

(a) The train compartment was originally the property of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation which is of the same model of the compartment currently on display at the Hong Kong Railway Museum. The train compartment was donated to Hong Kong Museum of History (HKMH) in 1989 and was put on display at a park of the Urban Council adjacent to the Science Museum at Chatham Road, Tsim Sha Tsui. In order to make way for the construction of the new HKMH, while there was inadequate display space in other museums to accommodate the train compartment, it was relocated to a Government depot at Cha Kwo Ling where most of the transport

collections of the HKMH were stored. Owing to its size, it could not be placed inside the depot. In order to provide proper preservation and maintenance, it has been covered by tailor-made PVC canvas and plastic sheets while monthly cleansing and inspection are undertaken by the museum staff.

At present, an old peak tram is stored in the depot. When the tram is put to display at the Peak Road Garden in 2007, the museum will consider storing the train compartment in the resulting vacant space. In the long run, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will overhaul the train compartment and arrange for its open display at a suitable place.

(b) At present, when considering the donation offers, in particular if large artifacts are involved, the HKMH would take into account the storage requirement. To address the shortage of collection storage facilities and to cope with the increasing museum collection items in the long run, LCSD has since last year studied the feasibility to build a Central Museum Collection Repository which will provide storage space for large-size collections.

(c) In general, the HKMH would acquire artifacts in accordance with its exhibition themes and scope of collections. Hence, such situation would not arise.

(d) The Hong Kong Railway Museum features the history of trains and railways while the HKMH covers general history on public transportation in its permanent exhibition 'Hong Kong Story'. Currently, we have no plan to set up a Transport Museum.

Ends/Wednesday, December 13, 2006

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