

## **LCQ5: Illegal discharge of firecrackers and fireworks**

\*\*\*\*\*

Following is a question by the Hon Wong Yung-kan and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (February 25):

Question:

Regarding illegal discharge of firecrackers and fireworks, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) of the number of reports of illegal discharge of firecrackers or fireworks received in each of the past three years, the number of persons convicted for such acts, and the penalties imposed on them;
- (b) of the quantities of firecrackers and fireworks seized in each of the past three years, the number of persons convicted of the related offences, and the penalties imposed on them; and
- (c) whether measures are taken to curb the smuggling of firecrackers and fireworks into Hong Kong whenever the Chinese New Year is approaching; if so, of the details of measures; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the three parts of the question is as follows:

- (a) The number of reports of illegal discharge of firecrackers or fireworks received by the Police in the past three years is as follows -

Year	Number of reports
----	-----
2006	92
2007	124
2008	60

In respect of the above cases, a total of three people were arrested, of whom one was prosecuted and fined \$300 upon conviction.

(b) The quantity of firecrackers and fireworks seized by the Police and the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) in the past three years is as follows -

Year	Quantity of firecrackers and fireworks (kg)
-----	-----
2006	9,037
2007	340
2008	192

In respect of the above cases, the Police and C&ED successfully prosecuted 30 people. The penalties imposed included fines ranging from \$250 to \$5,000; and imprisonment ranging from seven days to four months.

(c) C&ED regularly takes action to intercept the illegal import of firecrackers or fireworks at land control points, the airport and at sea. The department steps up its enforcement efforts in this respect during the Chinese New Year.

The Police also take measures on a regular basis to curb and combat the illegal import of firecrackers or fireworks. Before the Chinese New Year, the Police step up enforcement, publicity and education efforts in this respect, for example, through enhanced intelligence gathering, patrols and enforcement action; calling upon community organisations to drive home the message that it is illegal to discharge firecrackers or fireworks without a licence; and encouraging the public to report such activities.

Ends/Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Issued at HKT 14:57