

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 3723)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses
Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services
Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health
This question originates from: Estimates on Expenditure Volume I Page 251 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 224):

With regard to the provision of crematorium service by the Department, please advise this Committee on the following:

- (a) the number of cremation cases handled in and the usage rate of individual crematoria in Hong Kong in each of the past five years;
- (b) in view of the ageing population in Hong Kong and the increasing demand for cremation service, whether the Department will consider taking specific measures to enhance the handling capacity of various crematoria to cope with the increasing demand for the service in 2014-15; if yes, the specific work plan, the timetable, as well as the manpower and estimated expenditure to be involved; if not, the reason(s); and
- (c) whether the Department will consider allocating resources to carry out a study in 2014-15 on the public demand for cremation service for the coming period and the need to construct new crematoria; if yes, the specific work plan, timetable and estimated expenditure of the study.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Ka-lok, Kenneth

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The number of cremation sessions released, cremation sessions booked and the percentage of cremation sessions booked in public crematoria managed by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) in the past five years (2009 to 2013) were :

Name of Crematorium	2009			2010			2011			2012			2013		
	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)
Cape Collinson	12 510	11 820	94.5%	14 679	13 937	94.9%	14 514	13 640	94.0%	14 308	13 496	94.3%	7 992	7 844	98.1%
Diamond Hill	9 128	9 026	98.9%	9 197	9 131	99.3%	9 048	8 943	98.8%	8 839	8 807	99.6%	8 499	8 439	99.3%
Fu Shan	5 588	5 539	99.1%	7 393	7 346	99.4%	7 090	7 058	99.5%	7 901	7 879	99.7%	6 948	6 800	97.9%
Kwai Chung	7 705	7 645	99.2%	7 485	7 455	99.6%	8 193	8 143	99.4%	9 202	9 152	99.5%	8 265	8 250	99.8%
Cheung Chau	2 066	102	4.9%	1 536	137	8.9%	2 086	132	6.3%	2 067	160	7.7%	1 728	164	9.5%
Wo Hop Shek (Note 1)	2 408	2 354	97.8%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7 539	7 417	98.4%
Total:	39 405	36 486	92.6%	40 290	38 006	94.3%	40 931	37 916	92.6%	42 317	39 494	93.3%	40 971	38 914	95.0%

- (i) No. of cremation sessions released
(ii) No. of cremation sessions booked
(iii) Percentage of cremation sessions booked

Note 1 : Closed since June 2009 for reprovisioning and reopened since February 2013

- (b) and (c) It is the Department's pledge to provide a cremation session within the next 15 days from the date of application. Extra cremation sessions would be arranged as necessary to comply with the above performance pledge. Expenditure involved will be absorbed within our existing resources.

The Department is upgrading the cremators by phases to increase their handling capacity. The reprovisioning works for the Wo Hop Shek Crematorium were completed in January 2013, and seven new cremators have started operation by phases since February 2013. The reprovisioning of the Cape Collinson Crematorium is underway to provide ten new cremators and ancillary facilities in two phases, at an estimated cost of \$696.3 million. Phase I reprovisioning works involving four new cremators were completed in January 2013 and commissioned for use by phases since February 2013. Phase II reprovisioning works covering the remaining six cremators started in March 2013 are scheduled for completion by the end of 2015 tentatively. Upon completion of the reprovisioning of the Cape Collinson Crematorium, the number of scheduled cremation sessions per annum will be increased by 28.9% from 40 971 in 2013 to 52 800 in 2016.