

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 6490)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

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 250 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 498):

It is stated that the Department will continue to take forward plans and projects to provide more crematorium and columbarium facilities. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- (a) the number of deaths (Hong Kong residents) in each of the past three years with a breakdown by age, race and type of disabilities;
- (b) the numbers of niches in local public and private columbaria operated by religious or non-religious bodies, number of applications received, the number of niches allocated, the number of applicants on the waiting list for niches and the average waiting time for a niche in the past five years with a breakdown by religion; and
- (c) the number of niches in public and private columbaria operated by religious or non-religious bodies available for allocation in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply:

- (a) The number of deaths in the past three years is as follows –

Year	No. of deaths
2011	42 188
2012	43 672
2013	43 399

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) does not have the number of deaths (Hong Kong residents) by age, race and type of disabilities.

- (b) For niches provided in public columbaria, the information sought is given below:

Year	No. of niches (including new and re-allocated niches)	No. of applications for new and re-allocated niches received	Number of new and re-allocated niches allocated	No. of applications on "waiting list" for re-allocated niches ^{Note}	Average waiting time for re-allocated niches (Months)
2009	167 932	35 858	22 163	12 333	34.5
2010	167 932	1 404	639	11 945	30.5
2011	167 932	5 341	416	17 286	39
2012	213 182	29 119	1 867	22 138	43.5
2013	214 182	18 209	13 143	21 360	45

Note: *New niches are not allocated based on a waiting list system but through computer balloting.*

The number of niches in private columbaria operated by operators of private cemeteries in the past five years is as follows –

Year	No. of niches in				
	non-religious private columbaria	religious private columbaria			
		Catholic	Christianity	Buddhism	Others
2009	208 736	62 499	50 208	3 404	0
2010	211 639	62 499	57 654	3 404	0
2011	216 597	62 499	57 680	3 404	0
2012	224 887	62 499	57 680	3 404	0
2013	224 887	62 499	57 680	3 404	0

The Department does not have information on the number of applications received, the number of niches allocated, the number of applications on waiting list for niches and the average waiting time for a niche in private columbaria.

- (c) A total of 32 271 new niches are expected to be available for allocation in public columbaria in 2014 and 2015. As regards niches in private columbaria operated by operators of private cemeteries, the number of new niches available for allocation in 2014 and 2015 is given below:

Year	Non-religious private columbaria	Religious private columbaria			
		Catholic	Christianity	Buddhism	Others
2014	0	66	0	3 220	0
2015	10 300	0	10 293	0	0