

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)244

(Question Serial No. 5455)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

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 249 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 53):

Under this programme, there has been a significant increase in the number of blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies for two consecutive years. Given that there will be a further increase in the estimated number in 2014, please advise whether the Department has sufficient manpower to cope with the work; if not, whether additional resources and manpower will be allocated for conducting the tests. If additional resources and manpower will be provided, please give the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is responsible for verifying and collecting animal health certificates that accompany the live poultry imported from the Mainland, inspecting the health status of these birds and collecting from them samples for laboratory testing of avian influenza (AI). Samples taken by CFS at the Man Kam To Animal Inspection Station are sent to the Veterinary Laboratory under the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for testing. The estimated expenditure incurred by CFS to carry out the abovementioned AI surveillance on live poultry imported from the Mainland is \$8 million in 2014-15, representing an increase of 11% from the revised estimate of \$7.2 million in 2013-14. The number of CFS staff engaged in carrying out the above work will be 42, same as the provision in 2013-14.