

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)260

(Question Serial No. 4698)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: Not Specified

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 257 (if applicable)

Question (Member Question No. 107):

Regarding the engagement of “agency workers”, please provide the following information:

	2013-14 (the latest position)
Number of contracts engaging employment agencies (EAs)	()
Contract sum paid to each EA	()
Length of service contract for each EA	()
Number of agency workers	()
Positions held by agency workers	
Monthly salary range of agency workers	
• \$30,001 or above	()
• \$16,001 - \$30,000	()
• \$8,001 - \$16,000	()
• \$6,501 - \$8,000	()
• \$6,240 - \$ 6,500	()
• below \$6,240	()
Length of service of agency workers	
• over 15 years	()
• 10 - 15 years	()
• 5 - 10 years	()
• 3 - 5 years	()
• 1 - 3 years	()
• less than 1 year	()
Percentage of agency workers in the total number of staff in the Department	()
Percentage of amount paid to EAs in the total departmental staff cost	()
Number of workers who received severance payments / long service payments/ contract gratuities	()

Amount of severance payments / long service payments / contract gratuities paid	()
Number of workers with severance payments / long service payments offset by or contract gratuities calculated from the accrued benefits attributable to the employer's contributions to MPF	()
Amount of severance payments / long service payments offset by or contract gratuities calculated from the accrued benefits attributable to the employer's contributions to MPF	()
Number of workers with paid meal breaks	()
Number of workers without paid meal breaks	()
Number of workers working 5 days a week	()
Number of workers working 6 days a week	()

Figures in () denote percentage of change as compared with the same period in 2012-13

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

	2013-14 (as at 30.9.2013)
Number of contracts engaging employment agencies (EAs)	6 (-60%)
Contract sum paid to each EA	\$53,000 to \$857,000
Length of service contract for each EA	6 to 9 months
Number of agency workers	13 (-52%)
Positions held by agency workers	Agency workers mainly undertake general office support duties.
Monthly salary range of agency workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$30,001 or above • \$16,001 - \$30,000 • \$8,001 - \$16,000 • \$6,501 - \$8,000 • \$6,240 - \$ 6,500 • below \$6,240 	Note 1
Length of service of agency workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • over 15 years • 10 - 15 years • 5 - 10 years • 3 - 5 years • 1 - 3 years • less than 1 year 	Note 2

Percentage of agency workers in the total number of staff in the Department (Note 3)	0.1% (-0.1 percentage point)
Percentage of amount paid to EAs in the total departmental staff cost	0.09% (+0.02 percentage point)
Number of workers who received severance payments / long service payments / contract gratuities	Note 1
Amount of severance payments / long service payments / contract gratuities paid	
Number of workers with severance payments / long service payments offset by or contract gratuities calculated from the accrued benefits attributable to the employer's contributions to MPF	
Amount of severance payments / long service payments offset by or contract gratuities calculated from the accrued benefits attributable to the employer's contributions to MPF	
Number of workers with paid meal breaks	Note 4
Number of workers without paid meal breaks	
Number of workers working 5 days a week	5 (-81%)
Number of workers working 6 days a week	8 (Note 5)

Figures in () denote percentage of change as compared with the same period in 2012-13

The above excludes the procurement of services for supply of T-contract staff providing information technology service under a term contract centrally administered by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer.

Note 1: The wage levels, terms of employment and contractual terms are agreed upon between the agency workers and their employment agencies when they enter into employment contracts. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) does not have such information. Nevertheless, there are provisions in the contracts between the Department and the employment agencies requiring the latter to comply with Hong Kong laws in force during the contract period, including the Employment Ordinance and the Minimum Wage Ordinance.

Note 2: The Department does not keep information on the years of service of agency workers. As long as the contract requirements are complied with, the employment agencies may arrange any qualified staff to provide the services.

Note 3: The comparison is made with the figure as at 30.9.2012. It is not representative of the situation for the financial year concerned.

Note 4: The Department does not keep information on the number of agency workers with/without paid meal break.

Note 5: No agency worker worked for 6 days a week in the same period in 2012-13.