

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)091

(Question Serial No. 0717)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under Programme (3), it is stated that the Department will continue to take forward the assistance scheme to improve the fire safety and operating environment of fixed-pitch hawker areas in the coming year. Please provide information on the following:

1. the number of hawkers who have submitted applications under the above scheme in the current year; among them, the number of hawkers who have applied for relocation cum reconstruction grant and in-situ reconstruction grant respectively, and the number of hawkers who have opted for voluntary surrender of their hawker licences to the Government; the number of hawkers who had their applications approved, as well as the amount of grants and ex-gratia payments approved, under the above scheme in the current year;
2. the number of hawkers who have not submitted applications under the scheme as at February 2015; whether the Department will enhance promotion among the hawkers who have not submitted applications under the scheme in the coming year; if yes, the details, as well as the manpower and expenditure to be involved; if not, the reason(s);
3. given that the five-year "Assistance Scheme for Hawkers in Fixed-pitch Hawker Areas" launched on 3 June 2013 will end on 2 June 2018, whether similar schemes will be implemented upon completion of the scheme to continue to provide assistance to hawkers in fixed-pitch hawker areas; if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuen-han (Member Question No. 7)

Reply:

1. The information sought is provided below -

| Item | For the period of April 2014 to February 2015 | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Number of applications received | Number of applications approved | Amount of grant involved (\$) |
| Voluntary surrender of hawker licences | 92 | 87 | 10,440,000 |
| Relocation cum reconstruction of stalls | 229 | 41# | 1,622,600 |
| In-situ reconstruction of stalls | 646 | 138# | 4,696,000 |
| Total | 967 | 266 | 16,758,600 |

Payment for relocation or in-situ reconstruction grant is subject to compliance with all stall construction specifications and clearance of existing stall structure.

- Since the launch of the “Assistance Scheme for Hawkers in Fixed-pitch Hawker Areas” (the Scheme) on 3 June 2013 and up to 28 February 2015, of the 4 335 hawkers who are eligible to apply for a grant or ex-gratia allowance under the Scheme, 1 459 have submitted their applications. It is open to the remaining 2 876 hawkers to put in their applications any time before expiry of the Scheme in June 2018.

In the coming year, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) will continue to implement relocation of stalls, as agreed with the concerned hawkers, to abate fire risks. In addition, we will start a fresh round of hawker engagement meetings to encourage hawkers to apply early for grants for in-situ reconstruction of their fixed pitch stalls. We will also seek to enhance the effectiveness of information dissemination by showing the outlook of new stall designs both during the engagement meetings and via the Department’s website. Such work will be absorbed by the existing resources.

- Eligible hawkers may apply for assistance under the Scheme before it expires in June 2018. We would review the effectiveness of the Scheme upon completion.

- End -