

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE)132**

**(Question Serial No. 1022)**

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

Question:

With regard to public niches, please provide information on the following:

- (a) the number of deaths (Hong Kong residents) and the means of disposal of the dead (by burial or cremation) from 2012-13 to 2014-15; and
- (b) the number of applications for public niches in Hong Kong, the number of niches allocated, the total number of applicants on the waiting list for public niches and the average waiting time for a public niche from 2012-13 to 2014-15.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (Member Question No. 39)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

(a)

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of Deaths</b>	<b>No. of Burials</b>	<b>No. of Cremations</b>
2012	43 672	3 643	39 494
2013	43 399	3 573	38 914
2014	45 710	3 477	41 244

- (b) For new niches in public columbaria, there is no waiting list for their allocation. New niches are allocated through computer balloting and unsuccessful applications would be carried forward automatically to subsequent phases of allocation through computer balloting if the applicant has so requested in the application form. The information sought is as follows –

<b>Year</b>	<b>New niches</b>	
	<b>No. of applications</b>	<b>No. of niches allocated</b>
2012	24 267	1 612
2013	13 172	12 913
2014	16 321	12 053

Note: As unsuccessful applications in one phase of allocation would be carried forward to a subsequent phase of allocation automatically if the applicant has so requested in the application form, the year in which new niches are allocated may not be the same as that in which the applications are made.

In the past few years, on average about 230 niches per annum are returned to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. These niches are re-allocated according to the priority in the waiting list of the respective columbarium. The information sought is as follows –

<b>Year</b>	<b>Re-allocated niches</b>			
	<b>No. of applications</b>	<b>No. of niches re-allocated</b>	<b>No. of applications on the waiting list</b>	<b>Average waiting time (months)</b>
2012	4 852	255	22 138	43.5
2013	5 037	230	21 360	45
2014	5 554	193	23 235	54

- End -