

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE)142**

**(Question Serial No. 0281)**

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:

The estimates for the coming year will increase by 3.5% as compared with the current year. However, there will be a net decrease of 39 posts and a substantial decrease of nearly 40% in the collection of sludge by gully emptiers (tonnes) in the coming year. Please advise on the savings arising from the decreases involved in the items mentioned above.

Asked by: Hon LAU Wong-fat (Member Question No. 23)

Reply:

The net decrease of 39 posts and the decrease of 40% in the collection of sludge by gully emptiers in the coming year are not correlated.

The posts to be deleted are those Workman II grade posts that we do not have an operational need to retain. As they are already vacant, the deletion of these posts will not result in any net savings.

The estimated volume of sludge collected by gully emptiers in 2015 is, by weight, 40% less than that collected in 2014. This is mainly attributable to the fact that since July 2014 the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) has, upon the advice of Environmental Protection Department (EPD), stepped up actions to drain away the water content of collected sludge thoroughly before delivering it to EPD's disposal site. No net savings result for this Department from this new arrangement.

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